BRIDGE PARTY SATURDAY

B'klyn celebrates 120th B-day of its unique span



The Brooklyn Papers / Tom Callan

Borough President Marty Markowitz announces Brooklyn Bridge Party at Borough Hall this week.

By Deborah Kolben
The Brooklyn Papers

Get out your party hats — and maybe your umbrellas — the 120th birthday bash for the borough's most well known and beloved icon, the Brooklyn Bridge, is on for this Saturday, rain or shine.

A Brooklyn Philharmonic concert at dusk, a laser light show beneath the stars, and a network of tour buses to "introduce Brooklyn to Brooklyn," as Borough President Marty Markowitz put it, are just a small part of the blowout Memorial Day weekend event.

[For a complete, pullout guide to the festivities, see GO Brooklyn.]

The May 24 event marks the first ever "Brooklyn Bridge to the World" celebration, conceived and organized by Markowitz and his staff. The borough president hopes to make it an annual event. And despite forecasts of rain through Sunday, the party will go on, a Borough Hall spokesman said this week.

For 18 years, Markowitz's predecessor, Howard Golden, threw his "Welcome Back to Brooklyn" festival honoring Brooklyn natives who achieved renown.

That event brought actors, musicians, writers and others, such as Tony Danza, Dom DeLuise and Jerry Stiller, back to their native borough where for a day they sported a crown and scepter

See **PARTY** on page 6



The Brooklyn Papers / Greg Mangin

Coney Island beach and the Riegelman Boardwalk opened for the season on Wednesday. Despite some rain, Lana Girshik practices ballroom dancing on the boardwalk. This year marks the 80th anniversary of the boardwalk's opening, and the 100th anniversary of the old Luna Park.

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Jesus marchers rip denial of park permit

By Deborah Kolben
The Brooklyn Papers

A group of Pentecostal pastors is up in arms following the decision of a Community Board 7 committee to block noise amplification permits for rallies in Sunset Park.

The ruling upheld the local 72nd Precinct's decision to cease granting such permits.

But the evangelical leaders claims that decision was handed down specifically to bar a Christian group from holding their annual summer outreach event in Sunset Park.

The coalition of Christian churches, spearheaded by Bay Ridge's New Hope Fellowship congregation, fears a similar vote by the full board on May 21 might set a precedent for other community boards throughout Brooklyn. [On Wednesday, CBy put off the issue until next month.]

The brouhaha stems from a May 5 vote by the CB7 parks committee, recommending the board support the precinct policy.

The pastors claim that vote was "anti-Christian."

See **JESUS** on page 6



The Brooklyn Papers / Brad Hoenigan

Peek-a-boo!

Stephanie Santos, 7, of Red Hook, takes a gander at the face painting she's just received from Eric Sorenson during the Fifth Avenue Festival in Park Slope on Sunday.

Traffic is the worry

Biggest concern of D'town plan

By Deborah Kolben
The Brooklyn Papers

Traffic, transit and parking were the key issues on the minds of residents and merchants at a meeting Tuesday night on the potential impact of a $100 million plan to turn Downtown Brooklyn into the city's third largest business district.

The public hearing was held at Borough Hall to discuss the scope of the plan's Draft Environmental Impact Statement (DEIS), a study of the impacts of traffic, parking, open space and noise, among many others.

The plan would create more than 5 million new square feet of office space in Downtown Brooklyn and bring more than 18,500 jobs to the area. Downtown Brooklyn currently comprises 11 million square feet of office space and has just a .2 percent vacancy rate.

See **DOWNTOWN** on page 4

B'klyn Heights meet mulls Crown Heights 'travesty'

By Deborah Kolben
The Brooklyn Papers

Jewish leaders met in Brooklyn Heights Tuesday to plan action following what they called an unjust verdict in the case of a black man charged with murdering a Hasidic scholar because he was Jewish.

At the center of the meeting was Norman Rosenbaum, the brother of the victim, Yankel Rosenbaum, who was stabbed to death on a Crown Heights street in 1991 during a riot by blacks who were outraged after a Hasidic driver accidentally ran over and killed a 7-year-old black boy. Rosenbaum was



The Brooklyn Papers / Tom Callan

Rabbi Joseph Potasnik and Norman Rosenbaum during meeting in Brooklyn Heights at Congregation Mount Sinai.

29 when he was murdered.

A deadlocked federal jury last week came up with the controversial verdict in the trial of Lemrick Nelson. The jury ruled that Nelson, who was 16 at the time of the stabbing, violated the Jewish man's civil rights but did not cause his death.

Norman Rosenbaum addressed the gathering at Congregation Mount Sinai, on Cadman Plaza West, calling the jury's decision a "terrible travesty of justice."

The jury, Rosenbaum said, had "raped the legal system."

The verdict means that Nelson, who has already served almost nine years in prison, and faces just 10 years at sentencing, will be eligible for release in another year.

The split jury decision spared him a possible life sentence.

Norman Rosenbaum, 45, told the Jewish leaders Tuesday that the decision was particularly devastating following the revelation by the jury forewoman that the jurors knew about a negligence lawsuit filed against the hospital where his brother died.

"Everybody knew that," the forewoman told the New York Times. "How can you sue Kings County Hospital for negligence and at the same

See **CROWN** on page 6

Maimonides loses Brezenoff to LICH

By Deborah Kolben
The Brooklyn Papers

Maimonides Medical Center chief Stanley Brezenoff is stepping down after eight years at the Borough Park hospital. Brezenoff has taken a position as chief executive officer of Continuum Health Partners — operators of Long Island College Hospital in Brooklyn Heights.

Before joining Maimonides, Brezenoff was the director of the Port Authority of New York and New Jersey and served as a senior deputy mayor to Ed Koch. Last year, he was heralded as a leading candidate for city schools chancel-

See **BREZENOFF** on page 2

Firehouses in judge's hands

Brooklyn Supreme to rule on closing delay

By Neil Sloane and Patrick Gallahue
The Brooklyn Papers

A Brooklyn Supreme Court judge will determine Thursday whether six firehouses, four of them in Brooklyn, will be closed or get a reprieve.

A group of 16 elected officials, led by Borough President Marty Markowitz, filed suit this week to block Mayor Michael Bloomberg from closing the firehouses due to the city's worsening fiscal crisis.

The suit, naming Bloomberg, the Fire Department and Fire Commissioner Nicholas Scoppetta, was filed on May 14.

"We have tried to discuss this matter with the city. We have tried to be reasonable and they have not been," Park Slope Councilman Bill DeBlasio, one of the plaintiffs, said in announcing the suit. "And so, unfortunately, the administration has left us no choice but to seek our remedy in court.

"This is about public safety," he said, "the safety and security of families and homes — and we will not go away quietly."

In a hearing on Tuesday, May 20, Justice James G. Starkey said he would decide by Thursday, May 22 whether to grant an injunction barring the firehouse closings until he rules on the case. Starkey said he would need at least two weeks to make such a determination.

The plaintiffs are represented by Manhattan attorney John Burns who has taken the case pro bono.

Burns called the closings "arbitrary and capricious."

"The city basically said go ahead and close eight firehouses and then stepped over us with respect to the City Charter," he told The Brooklyn Papers.

On Monday, Bloomberg pulled two of the firehouses off the closure list, one in Brooklyn and another in Queens, saying the Albany aid package would cover their operating costs.

"I am pleased to announce that because of the assistance we have gotten today from Albany, and in the interests of exercising the maximum caution allowable given our still precarious fiscal situation, we now believe it is possible to reduce the number of fire companies that are slated for closing," Bloomberg said. "Engine

See **FIREHOUSES** on page 6

Mario's Deli to close after three generations of service



The Brooklyn Papers / Brad Hoenigan

Mario Correa and family members in his store at 90 Fifth St. last month.

By Beverley Wang
for The Brooklyn Papers

Mario's Deli in Park Slope seems more like an old-time apothecary than a corner bodega.

Instead of a plastic cashier's cage and chaotically stuffed shelves, there are Tiffany lights and custom-built fixtures in golden wood. When a neighborhood child runs in the door with two quarters and a yen for sweets, owner Mario Correa greets her by name and scoops a helping of gummy worms onto a square of white sandwich paper.

Three generations and 78 years of experience are packed behind the counter of Mario's. Located at 90 Fifth Ave., at the corner of Warren Street, the store provides service with neighborly familiarity. Daughter Maggie Correa and her 14-year-old twins, Amanda and Andrew Sanchez, are familiar faces there, as is her 7-year-old, Brandon Negron, who is handy at making change and passing out drinking straws.

"They're just part of the neighborhood. That's one of the things that makes the neighborhood so nice," said Curtis March, a longtime resident, who lives in an apartment above the store. March is a regular Mario's customer.

"It's different from other bodegas in area. Really neat and clean," he added.

But come June, there will be fewer familiar faces around the corner. After four years of slumping sales, Correa, who co-owns the business with his daughter, will close the shop for good. He estimated that business has dropped between 35 and 40 percent from previous years.

"The last two years have been really bad, but the bills are still the same," Correa said.

A sign went up in mid-March announcing the closure. Since then neighbors and regular customers have reacted to the news with surprise and dismay.

"I'm so sad that Mario is going," said Karen Stead Baigrie, who lived above the deli for four years. "They're a bit of the old Park Slope in a sense. They run a shipshape little business. They're a really good little place. It's always clean, always nice, always freshly stocked, [but] to be honest, how much money can you make selling ice cream and bottles of milk?"

While the Correas acknowledge that large supermarkets like Key Food and Costco have cut into their profits, they don't blame the bigger businesses for their losses.

"He's had stores on the same block as supermarkets before, and made money," Maggie said of her father.

Mario's Deli is Correa's sixth venture in a more than 30-year career in the small grocery business. It's not about selection, either, Maggie said, pointing out that the deli carries organic and gourmet products alongside Goya-brand and other Spanish goods. The failure of the business goes deeper, she said, to the buying habits and changing face of the Slopers living around Fifth Avenue.

See **MARIO'S** on page 4

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Ed Weintrob / A great restaurant, and a thimble of ice cream

I think it was Joel Wolfe, who ran Restaurant Lisanne on Atlantic Avenue in the late 1970s and '80s, who said he preferred a *real* review. Don't tell me you're coming, just come, eat, pay and write.

Lisanne, probably the best of the restaurants that were part of the early Brownstone Renaissance, was critically acclaimed, and it was a sad day when Joel closed his business. The locals loved it, but this was a long time before Smith Street's trendy chefs were able to capture the attention of the "City" and draw Manhattan hordes to their critical mass. Wolfe was pretty much alone, although others came, and mostly soon left, in spurts.

• • •

One of our early restaurant critics had come highly recommended, and his copy sounded informed and balanced. One day, my editor, Beverly Cheveront, showed me a review he'd submitted about a restaurant that was not assigned and was, in fact, outside the geographic area we were covering. The review was so scathing that when the day's work was done, much of the staff piled into The Paper's van and rode



out to this place, now long gone, on Avenue M in Midwood. We did not believe *any* restaurant could be as bad as he described.

It was enormous, it was packed. We had a long wait for a table.

Everyone was happy — it was a loud, boisterous neighborhood joint. The food was probably ok, but certainly secondary to the place.

When it was time for dessert, Beverly whipped out the review and showed it to our waitress. The critic said the restaurant served frozen fish; for dessert, he had ice cream — a "*thimble*" full of ice cream.

The waitress, livid, escorted us into the kitchen. "Find the frozen fish!" she demanded. We didn't.

As for the ice cream, while not conceding the "thimble" description, she supposed the critic had come for the luncheon special.

The meal, after all, was not assigned and so was on his dime.

• • •

Restaurant reviews have always been one of our most popular features, with immediate impact.

The weekend of a review's appearance in The Paper often finds diners cribbing their copy to select the recommended — or colorfully mentioned — dishes.

Readers absorb the spirit of a restaurant, its atmosphere and food range. Enticed, they'll give it a shot and are their own best judges.

A restaurant critic who cannot discern the difference between frozen and fresh should not attempt to do so. We never published the Avenue M review.

40th reunion

Last Sunday, I stepped back in time — time before The Brooklyn Paper. After 25 years of Papers, it's easy to forget the time before.

The 40th reunion of my elementary school class from the Yeshivah of Flatbush, which drew classmates from as far as North Carolina and Maine, was an opportunity to compare notes, and put a few things in perspective.

One classmate said he'd come for "closure." I went more for an opening, to look at a live page from the past and consider the paths I've taken and where they began.

After Flatbush, most of us went on to public schools and secular universities; Midwood High was my next stop.

Except in a novelist's fantasy, childhood is not necessarily life's easiest patch. But we owe those who helped us through it a debt which it's not always possible to adequately repay.

Ed Weintrob is founder and president of The Brooklyn Papers. To reach him, write: EdWeintrob@BrooklynPapers.com

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Heights activist Peak, 49

By Patrick Gallahue
The Brooklyn Papers

Attorney Robert Peak died suddenly on May 13 while jogging in Brooklyn Heights. He was 48.

The exact cause of death had not been determined at press time but, according to a family friend, it had been determined that he suffered from acute arrhythmia, an irregularity in the beating or rhythm of the heart.

Peak lived in the Heights with his wife, Marianna Koval, president of the Brooklyn Bridge Park Coalition, and their 10-year-old daughter, Charlotte. He worked in the Manhattan firm of Ropes & Gray specializing in regulatory proceedings involving general commercial, product liability and telecommunications matters.

Born in Brooklyn on Sept. 16, 1954, Peak was involved in a variety of progressive causes. He spent last summer in Turkana, Kenya helping build a nursery school with nine members of Downtown Brooklyn's St. Boniface Church. He also served on the church's parish council as head of the finance committee.

In April, he and his wife hosted a fundraiser that raised more than $25,000 for Democratic presidential hopeful Howard Dean.

The eldest of Adele and George Peak's five children, Bob grew up in East Northport, Long Island, with sisters Audrey, Cathy and Carol, and his brother, Bill. He attended Chaminade High School and graduated second in his class from Georgetown University in 1976, completing his degree in three years.

In 1979, Peak graduated from Harvard Law School and began practicing as a litigator at Dewey, Ballantine, Bushby, Palmer & Wood.

Peak moved to Reboul, MacMurray, Hewitt, Maynard & Kristol in 1981 and became a partner in 1986. His clients included Sprint, John Hancock and Mitsubishi Motors.

In 1986, he married Koval. They lived in Washington, D.C., for two years before moving to Brooklyn Heights in 1989.

When their daughter, Charlotte, was born on Jan. 8, 1993, according to friends, she became his principal focus and joy. Peak joined St. Boniface after Charlotte was born, and volunteered as a teacher at the church's Sunday school.

Peak also enjoyed spending



Robert Peak

time with his 13 nieces and nephews from both sides of the family.

His personal pleasures included playing piano — he started taking lessons four years ago — as well as drawing and reading.

Funeral services were held at St. Boniface and he was buried in Green-Wood Cemetery in Sunset Park.

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9:05 - 11:10 Hatha Basic Bernadette	10:55-12:10 Hatha Basic Sarah	10:45-12:10 Prenatal Beth D-C.	10:55-12:10 Hatha Basic Alinca	10:45-12:10 Parent-Baby Ruby Beth D-C.	9:30 - 11:00 Vinyasa Open Beth M.	Saturday Only 10:00-11:30 Jivamukti Open Robin
10:45 - 2:10 Parent-Baby Melissa	12:15 - 1:45 Jivamukti Basic Elizabeth	12:30 - 2:00 Hatha Basic Beth D-C.	12:15 - 1:45 Jivamukti Open Robin	12:30 - 2:00 Vinyasa Basic Gabrielle	10:55-12:05 Vinyasa Open Sandra	10:45-12:15 Vinyasa Open Alinca
12:15 - 1:45 Prenatal Bernadette	2:15 - 3:45 Hatha Basic Caroline	2:15 - 3:45 Vinyasa Open Sasha	2:15 - 3:45 Hatha Basic Melissa	2:15 - 3:45 Jivamukti Int./Adv. Elizabeth	11:30-12:25 Hatha Basic Beth M.	11:30-12:55 Hatha Basic Robin
12:30 - 2:00 Vinyasa Basic Gabrielle	4:30 - 5:30 Jivamukti Open Robin	4:00 - 5:30 Hatha Basic Michelle	4:00 - 5:30 Hatha Open Bernadette	4:00 - 5:30 Hatha Basic Elizabeth	12:30-2:00 Vinyasa Open Alinca	1:00 - 2:30 Vinyasa Int./Adv. Bernadette
2:15 - 3:45 Vinyasa Open Sasha	Saturday Only 8:30 - 9:55 Hatha Basic Robin	6:15 - 7:45 Vinyasa Open Bernadette	6:15 - 7:45 Jivamukti Basic Dana	6:30-7:55 Vinyasa Open Siobhan	2:15 - 3:45 Prenatal Yoga Beth M.	2:30 - 4:00 Hatha Gentle Natasha
4:00 - 5:30 Hatha Basic Sasha	6:30-8:15 Vinyasa Open April	7:45 - 9:15 Hatha Basic Bernadette	7:45 - 9:15 Jivamukti Open Dana	8:00 - 9:30 Hatha Basic Siobhan	2:00 - 3:25 Hatha Basic Helen	2:30 - 3:45 Prenatal Bernadette
5:40 - 7:10 Jivamukti Open Elizabeth	8:00 - 9:30 Jivamukti Open Robin	HATHA Focus on the physical body through postures and breath, staying in poses for one to two minutes.			3:30-5:00 Vinyasa Open Bo	3:15-4:45 Vinyasa Open Beth M.
7:15 - 8:30 Hatha Basic Beth M.	8:30-10:00 Hatha Basic April	VINYASA/JIVAMUKTI Flowing, dynamic style of yoga with special attention to alignment and breath.			5:00-6:30 Hatha Basic Tom	4:00 - 5:25 Hatha Basic Dana
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Fishy story at Cadman office

By Deborah Kolben
The Brooklyn Papers

There was something fishy about a break-in at an office in Downtown Brooklyn this week.

When police were called to the offices of a power company on Cadman Plaza East between Prospect Street and Red Cross Place at 3:40 pm on May 16, they discovered the room was in disarray, with cut computer wires.

They also noticed a large disemboweled fish that had been placed in a small, red toy wagon.

A computer keyboard was covered with fish entrails, police said.

A digital camera was the only item reported missing.

Looked away

A woman having breakfast at a restaurant on Seventh Avenue at Berkley Place got up to pay her check only to realize that her purse was gone.

The victim, 59, told police that her purse had been hanging on her chair and contained over $300 in cash.

The incident occurred at 9:30 am on May 14.

No rhinestones

If it's true that diamonds are a girl's best friend, then a woman on Monroe Place must be feeling mighty lonesome this week.

The victim told police that at 7:30 am on May 14 she noticed a plethora of jewelry had been lifted from her locked safe.

The stolen booty included a diamond ring, reportedly valued at $20,000, a diamond bracelet valued at $12,000, diamond earrings valued at $6,000, a diamond ring valued at $3,000, and a wedding band valued at $3,000.

Cuckoo for cocoa

A renowned chocolate shop in DUMBO had a not so sweet surprise when employees arrived at the store at 4 am on May 17 and discovered the cash register had been stolen.

A neighbor of the store, on Water Street at Main Street, told police he heard banging at 3:30 am and saw two men in their 40s leaving the building. The witness said one suspect was carrying a small square gym bag and the other was wearing a longshoreman's hat.

The register snatchers broke into the store through a wall of an adjoining hallway sometime between May 16 a 7:30 pm and 4 am the next day.

Boot prints led from the kitchen floor to the register area, police said. The amount of cash taken was still unknown.

Deliveryman rob

A group of boys who allegedly attacked a deliveryman on Sixth Avenue at Seventh Street were arrested on Third Avenue at First Street just after the incident, which happened on May 15 at 9:05 pm.

The victim, 44, was delivering food for a Peruvian restaurant on Fifth Avenue when he was stopped by a group of five teenagers who pushed him and made off with his bike.

Knee job

A man walking home from the subway station at 10:50 pm on May 11 was forced to his knees by three thugs who wanted his cash.

The victim, 33, passed three men in dark clothing on Bergen Street at Bond Street. One of the thugs turned around, pointed a gun at the victim, and demanded, "Get on your knees or you will die."

The victim got on his knees and was told to count to 100 while the three men fled east on Bergen Street with his wallet.

Missing guns

A gun owner reported to police this week that two of his legal firearms had gone missing.

The victim said he kept his three permitted guns in their gun boxes in a storage space in his apartment on Atlantic Avenue between Henry and Clinton streets.

When he checked those boxes this week, the owner said his Smith & Wesson revolver and Colt semi-automatic, each valued at $350, were not there.

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BREZENOFF...

Continued from page 1

lor, but reportedly did not want the position.

Brezenoff began his career in public service in 1978 when he was appointed Commissioner for the Department of Employment and later as Administrator of the Human Resources Administration. Mayor Edward Koch appointed Brezenoff as first deputy mayor in 1984 where he directed the day-to-day operations of city agencies.

Prior to his appointments in city government, Brezenoff served as a program officer for the Ford Foundation, from 1969 to 1978, where he was responsible for the foundation's $10 million program in non-judicial conflict resolution. He was also active in the Congress of Racial Equality and the Citywide Committee for Integrated Schools.

Brezenoff will assume his new position starting July 7.

"Stan is particularly known for his interpersonal skills, his vision, leadership qualities and his extraordinary knowledge of health care and public issues. We take great pride in his appointment," said Morton Hyman, chairman of Continuum's board of trustees.

At Maimonides, Brezenoff was hailed for his vast contributions to the hospital including an award-winning computer system, a new emergency room and birthing center, and plans for a new infants and children's hospital, which is scheduled to break ground this fall.

Pamela Brier, the executive vice president and chief operating officer at Maimonides will take over Brezenoff's position at Maimonides, which has 705 beds and a budget of $500 million.



The Brooklyn Papers File / Tom Callan

Stanley Brezenoff

"Brezenoff is a brilliant and gifted leader. We will work hard to continue the work begun under his tenure," she said.

Before joining Maimonides in 1995, Brier served as executive director at both Bellevue Hospital Center and Jacobi Hospital in Manhattan, and as vice president of the Southern Manhattan/Northern Brooklyn network of hospitals at the city's Health and Hospitals Corp.

Continuum was founded in 1997, uniting a network of hospitals including Long Island College Hospital in Brooklyn Heights and Beth Israel Medical Center, St. Luke's Roosevelt Hospital and the New York Eye and Ear infirmary in Manhattan.

The company has an annual budget of $2.2 billion and provides care through nearly 3,100 certified beds. The company employs 16,000.

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Appeals court rules for Miller

Associated Press

A Brooklyn appellate court ruled Monday that the City Council acted legally when it extended the terms of its speaker and five other members.

The eagerly anticipated decision is a significant victory for Speaker Gifford Miller and the five others, who had faced the prospect of being forced from office later this year, which would have changed substantially the landscape of city politics.

The six would have served fewer than two full four-year terms on the council because of a vagary in city election law that requires city council members to run for two-year terms — instead of four-year terms — every 20 years because of redistricting.



The Brooklyn Papers File / Tom Callan

Gifford Miller

The council was sued over its vote last year by a group led by a former council member, who claimed that the amendment to the 1993 term limits law violated the City Charter because the city did not hold a referendum.

In March, state Supreme Court Justice Gerard Rosenberg agreed that the statute, Local Law 27, was invalid because it effectively extended the terms some council members could spend in office. He said such a change requires a public referendum.

But the four-judge panel of the Appellate Division of the state Supreme Court in Brooklyn ruled that the City Council's amendment of the city's term limits law to allow Miller and the others to remain in office for longer than two terms did not violate the law.

Monday's appellate ruling overturning the March decision states: "Local Law 27 merely amended the term limit provisions of the City Charter without changing the length of term of office or curtailing any power of the office."

Marriott expansion gets OK from Community Board 2

By Patrick Gallahue

The Brooklyn Papers

Community Board 2 approved a $65 million extension of the New York Marriott Brooklyn on Wednesday that will allow developers to build over a city-owned garage adjacent to the building.

"We're very much appreciative of the support for the expansion of the hotel and the retail that we will be creating along Adams Street," said Harvey Schultz, Muss Development senior vice-president.

The 180,000-square-foot attached addition, called the Brooklyn Renaissance, is set to rise to 24 stories and accommodate 280 guests.

Included in the plans are 8,000 square feet of ground-floor retail in the hotel itself and 43,250 square feet of first- and second-floor retail in the adjacent office building at 345 Adams St. by 2007.

The lot is currently occupied by a dilapidated blue-brick parking garage surrounded by scaffolding. The application seeks to turn the lot over to the city Economic Development Corporation to sell to the Marriott.

The application also seeks to demap the abutting Pearl Street, north of Willoughby Street, to expand the pedestrian plaza between Adams and Jay streets with benches, planters and new lighting.

The attachment will be built by the Queens-based Muss Development Company, the developers of Renaissance Plaza and the Marriott hotel. Designing the building are Sandy Babcock Architects and William B. Tabler Architects; the landscape architect is the Moss Gilday Group.



The Brooklyn Papers / Tom Callan

The New York Marriott Brooklyn, left, next to the city-owned parking lot where a $65 million expansion will rise up.

Since opening its doors in 1998, the New York Marriott Brooklyn has boasted a 90-percent occupancy rate. It has been named "Marriott Hotel of the Year" two years in a row.

Because of the Marriott's success, the EDC selected the developer "sole source," meaning that it did not go out for bid.

The expansion will be linked to the main hotel by an enclosed, two-story bridge on the second and third floors over the promenade connecting Adams Street to Jay Street.

The EDC estimated that the expansion would create 200 new jobs and generate about $2.5 million in annual revenue for the city.

The new guest rooms, added to the existing 376-room hotel, will make the Brooklyn Marriott one of the biggest Marriotts in New York City.

The application will be considered by Borough President Marty Markowitz on May 21. It then goes before the City Planning Commission and the City Council.

Muss Development is hoping to begin the project next year and anticipates the expansion will take 18 months to build.





The Brooklyn Papers / Tom Callan

Special thanks

Honorees Ed Ross, vice president of the Brooklyn Heights Association, and Heights Association Executive Director Judy Stanton hold their William J. Bolton Community awards during ceremonies at the Church of St. Ann and the Holy Trinity on Montague Street Tuesday night. The award is given out by the church for individuals who have worked to advance the common good of the community and it's people.

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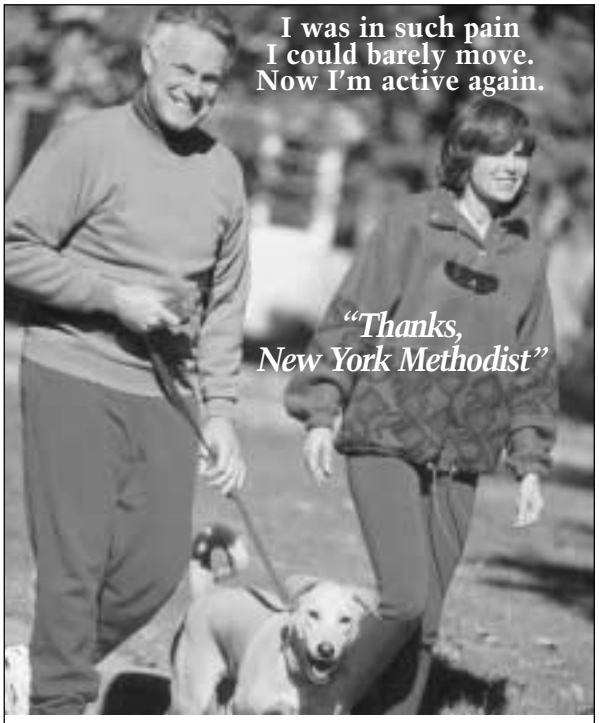
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F and Q trains return to the Stillwell Avenue Station in the spring of 2004.

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CB2 likes retail, homes for new 'Bridge Plaza'

By Patrick Gallahue
The Brooklyn Papers

The planned rezoning of an area of Downtown Brooklyn known as Bridge Plaza — for its proximity to the Brooklyn and Manhattan bridge entrances — passed its first hurdle when Community Board 2 unanimously approved the measure at its May 14 meeting.

The full board upheld a 9-0 vote by the Land Use committee on the Department of City Planning's application to convert swaths of manufacturing blocks to residential and commercial use.

"It was really meant to respond to community issues that we've heard for a long time that we thought the department should be responsive to," said Regina Myer, director of the Brooklyn office of City Planning.

The affected manufacturing blocks form a sideways L-shaped pattern in the area roughly bounded by Nassau Street to the north, Tillary Street to the south, Prince Street to the east and Jay Street to the west.

Those blocks will be rezoned from M1-1 to C6-2, which can accommodate an eight- to-16 story commercial and residential building; C4-3, which is amenable to six- to 11-story retail uses; and R6-B, which suits four- to five-story residential row houses.

The area is surrounded by massive housing and commercial developments such as Metrotech, Concord Village and the Raymond Ingersoll and Farragut housing projects. The rezoning area also abuts the massive rezoning plan for Downtown Brooklyn, which seeks to allow for commercial and residential expansion.

That plan anticipates the development of 5.4 million square feet of office space and more than 1,000 units of new housing. [see "Traffic is the worry" on page 1].

Mayor Michael Bloomberg will allocate $100 million in subsidies and capital improvements over seven to 10 years to that massive rezoning. Deputy Mayor Dan Doctoroff estimated as many as 18,500 office jobs would be created as a result of the plan.

The two plans, Myer said, would "complement" each other. And although the Bridge Plaza community is sandwiched between the rapidly developing neighborhood of DUMBO and the large commercial high-rise campus of Metrotech, Myer said there was no pressure from developers to bring forward the rezoning.

Jed Walentas, a spokesman for Two Trees Management, the largest developer in DUMBO, said of the Bridge Plaza area, "It's certainly not on our radar screen."

"I don't know anything about the rezoning in terms of the particulars but rezoning to residential would be good for Brooklyn and good for DUMBO," he added.

According to City Planning, Bridge Plaza had been a predominantly residential community, dating back to the 1800s, for workers from the Brooklyn Navy Yard.

"In the 1960s, the city expected a great residential boom," said Tony Ibelli, a longtime Bridge Plaza activist and member of CB2. "And they figured the best place [for manufacturing] would be near transportation points."

Ibelli applauded the rezoning initiative saying that most of those manufacturing buildings are now unused.

Among its active uses, the area now hosts a mix of three- and four-story residential buildings and automotive repair garages.

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DOWNTOWN...

Continued from page 1

Responding to the loss of 21,000 city jobs to New Jersey in the 1990s, the Bloomberg administration, along with the Downtown Brooklyn Council — an offshoot of the Brooklyn Chamber of Commerce — spent more than a year creating the comprehensive Downtown plan, the details of which were announced last month.

The mayor has pledged to fund the $100 million in infrastructure improvements and construction over the next seven to 10 years, with much of it coming in the first few years, but the project would still be largely dependant on market conditions and the ability to lure businesses and developers.

To deal with traffic, the city Department of Transportation has dedicated a full-time coordinator to study traffic issues that may arise.

But representatives from local community groups are concerned that it will take more than a coordinator to rid the streets of congestion.

Encouraging planning consultants to look at traffic patterns and subway stations and how they will accommodate the new influx of workers and residents to the area, community members pleaded their case Tuesday before representatives from the mayor's office and the Economic Development Corporation.

The DEIS is scheduled for completion by the fall.

Calling Downtown Brooklyn a "national traffic disaster area," Roy Sloane, president of the Cobble Hill Association, reiterated concerns about easing local traffic. He also stressed the importance of freeing up parking spaces for area residents.

Brian Ketcham, executive director of Community Consulting Services, a traffic pattern analyst in Boerum Hill, criticized the planners of using dated traffic methodology in the DEIS. He said it ignored the role of truck traffic and failed to explore the role of imposing bridge tolls on mitigating traffic.

Aaron Naparstek, a Park Slope resident and member of Transportation Alternatives, who claimed he was driven from his Cobble Hill apartment because of incessant traffic noise, called on the consultants to take into consideration bicycle parking in all new buildings and also encouraging alternatives to driving.

Sandy Balboza, president of the Atlantic Avenue Betterment Association, suggested a trolley connecting Downtown Brooklyn with the surrounding neighborhoods. [Community activist Robert Diamond has been trying to get a plan for a trolley line from Red Hook to Atlantic Avenue off the ground on a volunteer basis for the past decade but lost his Department of Transportation funding for the project this year.]

Other ideas included instituting residential parking permits, and expanding the width of staircases in subway stations, especially at the Lawrence Street station, which one speaker described as a "dungeon."

While a number of businesses and residents would be displaced by the plan, only a few speakers addressed that issue.

The Institute of Design and Construction, at 141 Willoughby Street, would be displaced to build a park under the plan. Vincent Battista, president of the institute, called the plan "flawed and unacceptable." He said the planners were putting the needs of private developers over the concerns of local residents

Speakers were also concerned that the aesthetics of the area be taken into consideration.

"We don't want to see this turned into another Manhattan and we don't want our office park to look like Middle America," said Marsha Rimler, who said she has lived in the area for more than 30 years.

The comment period on the DEIS will last for 10 days and the community is invited to submit written comments. Those must be received by May 30 and can be sent to Hardy Adasko, Senior Vice President, Planning, New York City Economic Development Corporation, 110 William St., New York, NY 10038.

A final Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) will be released within 30 days from the close of the comment period.

The city's Uniform Land Use Review Procedure (ULURP) — which consists of hearings before Community Board 2, the borough president, the City Planning Commission and the City Council — should begin in September and could be completed by April 2004. The EIS must be certified and included in the ULURP application.

The massive plan would allow for high-rise office buildings, possibly breaking the unwritten principle of not building higher than the Williamsburg Bank Building, as well as residential developments and the creation of two parks nestled among the structures.

The south side of Livingston Street, from Smith Street to Flatbush Avenue, would be rezoned to allow for residential buildings up to 250 feet tall, while Schermerhorn Street is eyed for smaller residential structures of no more than 140 feet.

The east side of Flatbush Avenue, between Tillary Street and Fulton Street, would be rezoned for residential buildings with ground-floor retail, and the south side of Myrtle Avenue, up to Ashland Place, would be rezoned for residential conversions.

The entire plan is expected to produce more than 1,000 units of new housing with 200,000 square feet of associated retail space.

Another swath, bounded by the Fulton Mall, Flatbush Avenue and extending into Willoughby Street — with an attached parcel bounded by Boerum Place, Livingston Street and Willoughby Street — is eyed for commercial development.

MARIO'S...

Continued from page 1

"All the people who just live day to day can't afford to live here anymore," she said. "In Park Slope, cool changes are happening, but for the small businesses, it's not good.

"Where there's more money, there are people who are working [in Manhattan]. They eat breakfast, lunch and dinner over there and when they come home they buy peanuts," she said.

Other merchants agreed with Maggie's mixed review of Fifth Avenue's upscale development.

"On one hand for businesses, new stores coming in are what's making the neighborhood — at least at this end — get more foot traffic. And at the same time, it gentrifies [the neighborhood]," said Judi Pfeiffer, president of the Fifth Avenue Merchant's Association and co-owner of Bob & Judi's Coolectibles, an antique shop at 217 Fifth Ave., at Union Street.

By Pfeiffer's estimate, more than 15 to 20 new bars and restaurants opened on Fifth Avenue in the last year.

"There were a lot more Italian bakeries and bodegas [before gentrification but] the truth of the matter of it was that there weren't a lot of people walking on Fifth Avenue," said Pfeiffer, a 20-year resident of the neighborhood.

The street is much safer now, she added.

But Correa's Park Slope pedigree reaches further back than his business. He first stepped foot here in the 1940s, as a child, from Puerto Rico. Ask Correa about the gangs of Park Slope, and he won't tell you about baby strollers. As a teen here in the '50s and '60s, Correa said he ran with the Untouchable Bishops, one of several neighborhood gangs with names like the Chaplains, South Brooklyn Boys and the Mau Maus.

"The border was Union Street. All the way down [from Flatbush Avenue] was Spanish," said Correa, who has since traded in his sleek dark locks for silver ones. "Not many drugs, just a six pack, drinking on the stoop, but nobody didn't bother nobody. People used to sit down, play dominoes in the street," he recalled in a voice tinged with nostalgia.

Correa said Sunday movie matinees were three for a dollar, pizza was 15 cents a slice, and the Key Food at Fifth Avenue and Baltic Street was a nightclub called the Brooklyn Casion, where the likes of Tito Puente played.

"It was alive," he said.

Looking to the future, the Correas are trying to get out of the grocery business with some cash in hand. Everything is for sale, including refrigerators, deli equipment and all the fixtures.

"We really need the community's help with that," said Maggie. "We're hoping to get rid of everything," she said, pointing out the deli's wide selection of beers, which includes some rarities like La Tropical, a Cuban beer brewed in Florida, and several hard-to-find Czech brands.

"As far as we know, nothing's gonna be here, as of yet," said Maggie. For now, she said, they are focusing on clearing as much stock as possible.

The owner of the building did not return calls seeking comment on the future of the space. The Correas said they don't know of any plans for future tenants.

"It's a long ride — 32 years," said Correa. But the divorced father of three and grandfather of five, refused to get sentimental.

"All my daughters, they want me outta here," he said. "They know I been working hard."

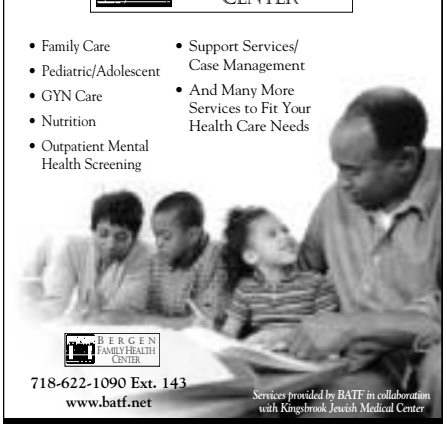
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Associated Press / Robert Spencer

During a disaster response drill in Sunset Park, an emergency worker not wearing protective gear is "aided."

Sunset Park hosts mock terrorist WMD attack

Associated Press

Several city agencies participated in a five-hour field exercise Sunday that tested their readiness to respond to a weapons of mass destruction attack on New York.

The real-time exercise, titled Operation Winter Sun, took place on a pier at 39th Street and First Avenue in Sunset Park. In the exercise, authorities responded to a 911 call in which "patients" simulated the effects of a chemical, biological or radiological attack. They were treated and decontaminated much as they would be in an actual attack.

City officials evaluated the utilization of new counter-terrorism equipment during the exercise, the assessment of the patients by emergency teams and the efforts made to contain the incident.

The evaluation will also be used for similar training in other cities.

At a news conference, Mayor Michael Bloomberg praised the drill saying it shows "how responders, including local hospitals, deal with a terrorist threat while minimizing risks to themselves and others."

Similar drills were recently held in Seattle and Chicago, which included a simulated detonation of a radioactive "dirty bomb" and a mock plague.

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Piers 6-12 public meeting

The Brooklyn Papers

The Port Authority of New York and New Jersey and the city Economic Development Corporation will hold the first of three public meetings to discuss the future of Piers 6-12, on Thursday, May 22, at 6:30 pm, at the Miccio Police Athletic League Center, 110 W. Ninth St. in Red Hook.

A project overview is to be presented, followed by a forum to share ideas and provide input for the study. The Port Authority and the EDC have hired the consulting team of Hamilton, Rabinovitz & Alschuler, which is the firm consulting the Brooklyn Bridge Park developers.

The last vestiges of a working Brooklyn waterfront, current leases for the piers expire at the end of April 2004. Ideas for the piers have ranged from continuing shipping use, residential and retail uses to Carnival Cruise Lines' proposal to dock at Pier 7.



The Brooklyn Papers / Brad Horrigan

Michael Furey (in classic uniform) and Richie Kevin identify Civil War soldiers buried in the Green-Wood Cemetery in Sunset Park.

A 'civil' service at Green-Wood

The Brooklyn Papers

Officials at Green-Wood Cemetery led Civil War re-enactors from the 14th Brooklyn Infantry and the 5th New York Infantry in search of the burial sites of thousands of Civil War veterans in honor of Armed Forces Day Saturday.

Members of the Green-Wood Historic Fund's Civil War Project, which seeks to ensure that every Civil War veteran receives a gravestone, led the search. The group covered about half of the cemetery on Saturday. Subsequent searches will be scheduled, according to cemetery officials.

"In all, there are 16 Union and two Confederate generals buried at Green-Wood Cemetery, as well as 37 Union officers who were brevetted brigadier generals," said Jeffrey Richman, Green-Wood's historian. "No place today has a greater connection to, and more to say about, 19th-century New York than Green-Wood Cemetery and today we honor those who gave their lives for us to live in freedom."

During the Civil War, Green-Wood created the Soldiers' Lot for free veterans' burials. Men who fell at the Battles of Bristoe Station (Virginia), the Wilderness (Virginia), Antietam (Maryland), Gettysburg (Pennsylvania) and Shiloh (Tennessee) are also buried there.

Green-Wood President Richard Moylan estimated that there are as many as 4,000 Civil War veterans buried at the cemetery — third only to the Arlington National and West Point Cemeteries. To date, the graves of about 2,225 Union soldiers and sailors have been identified at Green-Wood.

The cemetery was established in 1838 on 478 acres. It is bounded by Fourth Avenue on the north, Fort Hamilton Parkway on the south, 37th Street on the east, and 20th Street on the west.

— Neil Sloane

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Liquor on Sunday

By Joel Stashenko
Associated Press

The State Liquor Authority told wine and liquor store owners Tuesday they can be open Sundays starting this weekend, if they remain closed one other day each week.

The SLA said it would be getting forms to the state's 2,484 wine and liquor store licensees that would allow them to do business on Sundays from noon to 9 pm.

"The State Liquor Authority is working expeditiously to implement the provisions of this legislation," SLA spokesman Mark Anderson said.

The sale of liquor or wine for off-premises consumption has been banned since before Prohibition. Like other "blue laws," the ban had its origins in more religious-oriented times when commerce on Sunday was thought to violate the Sabbath.

Proponents of the liquor sales provision said Sunday is potentially the second most lucrative day of the week for liquor sales after Saturday. They predict that letting stores open Sunday and close on a lower sales-volume day could generate up to $26 million more through higher taxes on liquor and wine.

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PARTY...

Continued from page 1

and got a taste of what it felt like to be king of their very own Borough of Kings.

But in his first couple of months in office, Markowitz proclaimed "Welcome Back" dead in the water, saying the borough should not be celebrating those who have left, but rather what it has. He announced plans for a Brooklyn Bridge celebration.



The Brooklyn Papers / Tom Callan

Beep Markowitz (center) with "Emily Roebling" and "Lady Liberty"

The last big bash for the bridge was the centennial of its opening on May 24, 1983. Nearly 1.5 million spectators gathered to watch as an estimated 18,000 revelers marced across the bridge's roadway, many of them dressed in 19th-century regalia. The most massive and breathtaking fireworks display in Brooklyn's history followed.

Saturday's event kicks off with the BIG Crossing, a coordinated walk, run and bike ride from Manhattan to Brooklyn.

"This is a great opportunity for Brooklynites and people from throughout New York City to experience everything Brooklyn has to offer," said Markowitz. "You can travel the world without your passport right here in Brooklyn. You may come for the celebration, but you might not ever want to leave."

Free bus tours will depart from Cadman Plaza Park every hour between 11 am and 5 pm, shuttling party-goers to Green-Wood Cemetery, the Wyckoff Houses, Little Odessa in Brighton Beach, and a tour of historic Brooklyn houses led by Borough Historian Ron Schweiger.

Buses will also shuttle between Cadman Plaza and major Brooklyn sites including the Grand Army Plaza Arch, Prospect Park, the Williamsburg Arts Center and the 20th Annual Dance Africa festival at the Brooklyn Academy of Music.

At Empire-Fulton Ferry State Park, on Water Street between Main and New Dock streets, there will be hourly lectures about the Brooklyn Bridge; performances by Brooklyn artists between noon and 5 pm; a performance by the U.S. Army Old Guard Fife and Drum Corps; a marionette show of "Sleeping Beauty" at 2 pm and 4 pm; and an ode to the Brooklyn Bridge by poets at 6:30 pm.

The day will finish off with a sunset concert by the Brooklyn Philharmonic, conducted by Edward Outwater, at 7 pm and a laser light show on a six-story, 100-foot-wide screen in Empire-Fulton Ferry State Park.

While the 1.13-mile-long suspension bridge is the real star of the party, an edible 12-foot cake replica of the bridge might steal some of the limelight.



The Brooklyn Papers / Brad Horrigan

Old Guard march

Members of "The Old Guard," the Army's offical ceremony unit, named in honor of the 3rd U.S. Infantry, march at Fort Hamilton Army Base during Saturday's Twilight Tattoo, a yearly celebration of our armed forces.

CROWN HEIGHTS...

Continued from page 1

time tell people this guy stabbed him to death?"

The foreowman, an administrator and part-time anatomy instructor who lives in Brooklyn, spoke to the Times by telephone on condition that her name not be published, the newspaper said.

The defense had argued that Rosenbaum's wounds at the hands of Nelson were non-lethal, and that he died of botched medical care.

After Rosenbaum's death, his family filed a lawsuit against Kings County Hospital Center, alleging negligence. But Judge Frederic Block ruled that testimony about the lawsuit, which is still pending, was legally irrelevant and could not be introduced during the trial.

The jury foreowman told the Times she used to work at Kings County Hospital and knew about the accusation of negligence, though she said she didn't tell other jurors about it.

Jurors take an oath to disregard anything they have previously read or heard about the case and to consider only the information put before them in the courtroom.

The foreowman also said the jury did not think Nelson directly violated Rosenbaum's civil rights, but ruled as they did because they believed he aided and abetted others who were violating his civil rights.

"We didn't believe he was racist," she told the Times. "He just followed the crowd."

The breakfast meeting at Congregation Mount Sinai — organized by Rabbi Joseph Potasnik, the spiritual leader of the Brooklyn Heights synagogue, who is also president of the New York Board of Rabbis and a Fire Department chaplain — centered on what happens next.

"It has to stop now. This is not a Jewish issue, it affects everybody," Rosenbaum said of the jury's decision.

Rabbi Avi Weiss, of the Hebrew Institute of Riverdale, called on the city's rabbis to lead a formal protest that would garner attention to the jury's decision.

"A Jew was killed because he was a Jew and it's up to us to lead. Rabbis have to be the moral conscience," said Weiss, who condemned the Jewish community's dearth of public displays of outrage.

"I'm here for the long haul. There will be no stone left untumed," said Rosenbaum, who lives in Australia but has traveled to the United States more than 100 times over the past 12 years seeking justice for his brother. He also stressed the importance of not looking at the verdict as just a Jewish issue.

During the 1990s, Nelson was acquitted of state murder charges and convicted of federal civil rights charges, a verdict that was overturned because the judge tampered with the racial makeup of the jury. The defense at those trials had insisted Nelson was not the killer.

This time, the defense did not deny Nelson stabbed Rosenbaum but said it had nothing to do with the fact that the victim was Jewish — a key element needed for a conviction.

Instead, the lawyers said Nelson had been drinking beer all day and made a "horrible mistake" as he was swept up in the mob mentality. Prosecutor Lauren Resnick countered that Rosenbaum was killed "not because of anything he'd done, but because of who he was — an Orthodox Jew."

Fay Rosenbaum, the victim's mother, will travel from Australia with her husband, Max, to deliver a victim's impact statement at Nelson's June 30 sentencing. That day is also her 70th birthday.

A group of Jewish lawyers at the breakfast agreed to team up to look at legal steps that can be taken to address the jury's verdict.

With Associated Press reports.

JESUS...

Continued from page 1

CB7 leaders maintain they are watching out for the quality of life of Sunset Park residents who live around the park, which runs from 41st through 44th streets, between Fifth and Seventh avenues. The 72nd Precinct adopted the experimental policy two weeks ago.

That decision came out of a three-year dispute over noise in the area.

The church group has yet to apply for a permit for the rally.

Capt. Dominick Gentile, commanding officer of the 72nd Precinct, could not be reached for comment by press time.

At a meeting on Friday, 50 pastors gathered with elected officials and members of the community at the Pentecostal Assembly church, on 47th Street between Third and Fourth avenues, to plead their case and plan a rally should the community board vote to support the police precinct.

Board chairman Joseph Longobardi attended Friday's meeting. He said the Christian group could hold their event in Sunset Park, but just would not be able to use sound amplification equipment.

"What good is that? If I go into a park without a microphone who is going to listen?" state Sen. Ruben Diaz told The Brooklyn Papers.

Diaz, a Pentecostal minister and former councilman from the South Bronx, said the churches were being discriminated against.

Diaz attended Friday's meeting at the request of local pastors.

"Lately, I'm finding out that anything that has to do with God is taboo. The more we go away from God the worse things will get. Prayer doesn't do harm," said Diaz, who is also responsible for delivering the first-ever Pentecostal religious service held inside City Hall.

Councilwoman Sara Gonzalez, whose district primarily includes Sunset Park, said the issue was not one of Hispanic churches versus a white community board, but rather a constitutional right for people to assemble.

"Why should we deny that right?" asked Gonzalez, who said that permits should continue to be granted to anyone who submits the proper paperwork.

"The district is primarily Latino and that's the culture," she said. "These churches have assisted with many social services. They are helping out in a time when our budget is being cut.

"If you pull the permits, we're going backwards," she added.

Jerry Dominguez, a member of the New Hope Fellowship Church in Bay Ridge, which organizes the annual evangelical community outreaches throughout Brooklyn's parks, as well as the annual March for Jesus in Downtown Brooklyn, said the group had received a letter of support from Republican state Sen. Marty Golden, whose district includes Bay Ridge.

Golden sent a letter in February urging the Fort Hamilton Army Base to allow the group to hold this year's March for Jesus there. The request was denied due to heightened security.

While Longobardi said he was looking for a solution amenable to all the parties involved, Dominquez said the Christian groups were not going to let the issue drop.

He expects hundreds of protesters to flood Wednesday's CB7 meeting.

Of the planned protest outside CB7 headquarters, Longobardi said, "You're trying to cause a problem where there is no problem."

Twice in the last four years, the Christian group has gathered thousands of followers to Borough Hall Plaza, at Cadman Plaza East, for a massive June rally that is part of an international event titled the March for Jesus. The hours-long event includes hymns, songs of praise and faith healing sessions.

FIREHOUSES...

Continued from page 1

293 in Woodhaven, Queens and Squad 252 in Bushwick, Brooklyn will not be closed as previously announced."

But Bloomberg's announcement only seemed to add fuel to the fire, with some legislators claiming he is saying the closures will not affect public safety on the one hand, while on the other hand citing safety statistics as the reason he saved the two houses.

"At best, it seems the city is not sure, because it has not done the 'hard look' analysis at the safety and health impact of its decision required by state and city environmental laws," said DeBlasio.

That point is one facet of the lawsuit. Burns cited precedents such as Powisa v. Giuliani (1994) in which the appellate division held that the city's plan to eliminate fire alarm boxes was an action that required an environmental assessment.

The action also seeks to discount the recommendation of the blue-ribbon commission.

The commission was formed during a budget modification late last year after the mayor suggested closing the eight firehouses to save $10.8 million. The City Council and Bloomberg agreed last November to stall the closings in order to convene a commission to investigate alternative cost-saving measures.

Still on the chopping block are Engine 204 in Cobble Hill, on Degraw Street between Court and Smith streets, and Engine Company 278 in Sunset Park, on Seventh Avenue at 50th Street.

The seven-member panel was comprised of three representatives from the Fire Department, two Bloomberg appointees and two appointees of City Council Speaker Gifford Miller.

On April 7, the committee voted to shutter eight firehouses, but two dissenting members told the City Council earlier this month that the committee was only a smokescreen and that it never studied the budget and only met for a total of five or six hours in their three meetings.



The Brooklyn Papers File / Tom Callan

Rally to save Engine 204 firehouse in November.

Frank Fellini, a retired assistant fire chief and Brooklyn borough commander, who was an appointee of Council Speaker Gifford Miller to the panel, told the council's Fire and Criminal Justice committee that "the vote was pro forma."

In addition, the suit charges that the 45-day required notice to communities about firehouse closings should be discounted in the case of Engine 278 because it never submitted a plan for Battalion 4, which also operates out of the firehouse.

"We think the lawsuit is frivolous and without merit and a waste of taxpayers' money," Jordan Barowitz, a Bloomberg spokesman said earlier this week.

In court on Tuesday, Burns argued that the court should grant an injunction to prevent the closing of the firehouses, which is scheduled for Friday.

"We have asked the city to wait for the court to rule before taking any further action," said Markowitz. "And, if the city fails to do so voluntarily, we have asked the court to exercise its discretionary power to order the city to wait until the court reaches a final decision."

City attorney Chlarens Orsland asked Judge Starkey to require the plaintiffs to post a bond if he orders the city to delay the threatened closings.

DeBlasio called the suggestion outrageous. "We shouldn't have to buy a ticket to have our day in court," he said. "What is the city's hurry?"

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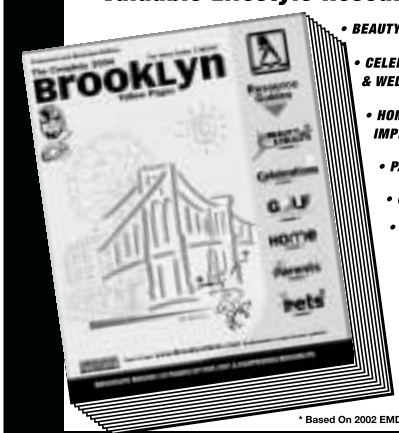
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LEGAL AND PUBLIC NOTICES

NOTICE OF SALE. SUPREME COURT - COUNTY OF KINGS. JP Morgan Chase Bank as Trustee for the CSFB Mortgage Pass-Through Certificates, Series 2002-512, Plaintiff against Lurether Tatum, et al., Defendant(s). Pursuant to a judgment of foreclosure and sale entered herein and dated April 22, 2003, I, the undersigned Referee will sell at public auction at the Kings County Courthouse, Room 261, 360 Adams Street, Brooklyn, County of KINGS, State of New York, on June 26, 2003 at 3:00 PM, premises on the westerly side of Crystal Street, 180 feet south of Glenmore Avenue, being a plot 20 feet by 100 feet and known as 126 Crystal Street, Brooklyn, New York. Approximate amount of lien $24,468.92 plus interest and costs. Premises will be sold subject to provisions of filed judgment, Index Number 39430/02. Dated: May 12, 2003. Michael W. Appelbaum, Esq., Referee. Zavatsky, Mendelsohn, Gross, Savino & Levy, LLP, Attorneys for Plaintiff, P.O. Box 510, 33 Queens Street, Syosset, New York 11791-0510. BP21-24

NOTICE OF SALE. SUPREME COURT - COUNTY OF KINGS. JP Morgan Chase Bank as Trustee for the CSFB Mortgage Pass-Through Certificates, Series 2002-512, Plaintiff against Lurether Tatum, et al., Defendant(s). Pursuant to a judgment of foreclosure and sale entered herein and dated April 22, 2003, I, the undersigned Referee will sell at public auction at the Kings County Courthouse, Room 261, 360 Adams Street, Brooklyn, County of KINGS, State of New York, on June 26, 2003 at 3:00 PM, premises on the westerly side of Crystal Street, 180 feet south of Glenmore Avenue, being a plot 20 feet by 100 feet and known as 126 Crystal Street, Brooklyn, New York. Approximate amount of lien $24,468.92 plus interest and costs. Premises will be sold subject to provisions of filed judgment, Index Number 39430/02. Dated: May 12, 2003. Michael W. Appelbaum, Esq., Referee. Zavatsky, Mendelsohn, Gross, Savino & Levy, LLP, Attorneys for Plaintiff, P.O. Box 510, 33 Queens Street, Syosset, New York 11791-0510. BP21-24

NOTICE OF SALE. SUPREME COURT OF THE STATE OF NEW YORK. COUNTY OF KINGS. BANKERS TRUST COMPANY OF CALIFORNIA, N.A., AS TRUSTEE UNDER THE POOLING AND SERVICING AGREEMENT, DATED AS OF SEPTEMBER 26, 1997, DELTA FUNDING HOME EQUITY LOAN TRUST 1997-3, Plaintiff, v. EDNA M. FULTON, et al., Defendants. Index No. 17619/98. Pursuant to a Judgment of Foreclosure and Sale granted herein on April 11, 2001, I the undersigned, the Referee in said Judgment named, will sell at public auction at the "front" of the Courthouse steps, facing Adams Street, 360 Adams Street, Brooklyn, NY 11201, County of KINGS, State of New York on June 18, 2003 at 10:00 A.M. of that day, the premises directed by said Judgment to be sold and therein described as follows: Said premises being known as and by street address 125 MacDonough Street, Brooklyn, New York 11216. Block 1852 Lot 52. Said premises are sold subject to the terms and conditions of the filed Judgment and the Terms of Sale. Approximate amount of Judgment $164,362.55. Dated: Westbury, New York, May 1, 2003. Steven Cohn, Esq., Referee. Adam E. Mikolay, P.C. Attorney for Plaintiff. 900 Merchants Concourse, Suite 208, Westbury, New York 11590. 516-222-2050. BP20-23

NOTICE OF SALE. NOTICE OF PROPOSED SALE OF: 148 Seeley Street, Brooklyn, New York 11218. MAUREEN P. FONTI, ESQ., the Court Appointed Guardian of GERTRUDE REILHAN, the Incapacitated Person, is procuring bids by her (MLS) Real Estate Broker, George L. Clark Realty, for the following parcel(s) of real property: 148 Seeley Street, Brooklyn, New York 11218. This property is offered subject to a Life Estate Interest to be retained by the Incapacitated Person, who will continue to reside in the property and subject to such title as any reputable New York State title insurance company will insure. Closing must take place within thirty (30) days of June 10, 2003. ONLY WRITTEN BIDS WILL BE CONSIDERED. An open house to be held by the Broker, GEORGE L. CLARK REALTY, on June 8, 2003 from 12:00 noon to 2:00 PM. Please forward your bids in written form to: MAUREEN P. FONTI, ESQ. FONTI & FONTI. Guardian for Gertrude Reilhan, the Incapacitated Person. 8516 - 23rd Avenue, Brooklyn, New York 11214. Written bids must be received on or before June 9, 2003. BP20-23

SUPREME COURT – COUNTY OF KINGS. ACCREDITED HOME LENDERS, INC., Plaintiff against PERRY BUCKNER, et al Defendant(s). Pursuant to a Judgment of Foreclosure and Sale entered on April 14, 2003. I, the undersigned Referee will sell at public auction in Room 261 of the Kings County Courthouse, 360 Adams Street, Brooklyn, N.Y. on the 12th day of June, 2003 at 3:00 p.m. premises Beginning at a point on the Northerly side of MacDonough Street distant 75 feet Easterly from the corner formed by the intersection of the Northerly side of MacDonough Street with the Easterly side of Howard Avenue; being a plot of 100 feet by 25 feet by 100 feet by 25 feet. Said premises known as 569 MacDonough St. Brooklyn, N.Y. 11233. Tax account number: SBL # 1497-70. Approximate amount of lien $386,020.17 plus interest and costs. Premises will be sold subject to provisions of filed judgment and terms of sale. Index No. 2870/02. Alan M. Roscoff, Esq., Referee. Fein Such & Crane, LLP, Attorney(s) for Plaintiff. 1800 First Federal Plaza, Rochester, N.Y. 14614. BP19-22

NOTICE OF SALE. SUPREME COURT - COUNTY OF KINGS. Mortgage Electronic Registration Systems, Inc. as nominee for Greenpoint Mortgage Funding, Inc., Plaintiff against Clement O'Donoghue, et al., Defendant(s). Pursuant to a judgment of foreclosure and sale entered herein and dated March 3, 2003, I, the undersigned Referee will sell at public auction at the Kings County Courthouse, Room 261, 360 Adams Street, Brooklyn, County of KINGS, State of New York, on June 5, 2003 at 3:00 PM, premises on the northwesterly side of 6th Avenue, 50 feet southwest of 22nd Street, being a plot 25 feet by 100 feet and known as 710 6th Avenue, Brooklyn, New York. Approximate amount of lien $284,168.08 plus interest and costs. Premises will be sold subject to provisions of filed judgment, Index Number 30545/02. Dated: April 21, 2003. Anthony G. Gross, Esq., Referee. Zavatsky, Mendelsohn, Gross, Savino & Levy, LLP, Attorneys for Plaintiff, P.O. Box 510, 33 Queens Street, Syosset, New York 11791-0510. BP18-21

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HEALTH, MIND & BODY

Something to smile about

Dr. Michael Donato Jr., DMD

Orthodontics is the science and art of correcting tooth misalignment, bites and jaw problems in children and adults, commonly referred to as "straightening teeth."

An orthodontist is a dentist who received two to three years additional schooling to master the science of diagnosing and treating malposed teeth and jaw disharmonies.

There are many causes for misaligned teeth. You may have oversized teeth and small jaws — causing crowded, rotated or overlapped teeth. Other problems may be due to early loss of teeth, improper muscle function, birth defects, jaw growth or accidents.

Patients seek orthodontic treatment for crowded, spaced or protruding teeth. Some request therapy for overbites, or for teeth that do not meet. Still others consult an orthodontist if their lips cannot come together at rest, for persistent mouth breathing, or if the tongue is not positioned properly at rest and when swallowing.

Just as your child's first trip to the family dentist should occur at age 2, the American Association of Orthodontists recommends the first visit to the orthodontist should be at age 7. At this age, the child may be too young for the traditional orthodontic appliances, "braces," however, certain interceptive or guiding therapies may be indicated. These treatments may help growth disturbances, remove harmful habits, or gain or hold space to possibly negate the need for extraction of permanent teeth.

The first visit to the orthodontic office is a simple evaluation to determine if treatment is necessary. If so, the doctor may ask the patient to have records (radiographs, photos, molds) taken in order to properly diagnose the treatment, time-frame, and fee.

At the third visit the braces will be inserted and the patient will now return for monthly adjustment visits. None of the visits to the orthodontic office are particularly painful. Anesthesia, sweet air, or drilling is never required. Actually, patients are always surprised how easy it is. A little tightness is all that is felt at each visit, however, when the patient goes home the teeth will begin to feel sore or tender for a couple of days. Over-the-counter pain medications and something cold to eat or drink are usually all that is ever needed.

When the braces have aligned all the teeth, they are removed and retainers are placed. The retainers are extremely important and most often overlooked by patients. The bone around the newly positioned teeth is not "set" and the retainer acts as a cast or splint to set the tooth in the bone, until it firms.

Successful orthodontic treatment depends on patient cooperation not only with retainers but with oral hygiene, elastic band/headgear wear and keeping regular appointments. With good patient cooperation a successful result can be anticipated giving the patient something worth smiling about.

Not all patients have the privilege of orthodontic therapy as a child and subsequently we are witnessing an increase in adult patients undergoing treatment. Close to 15 to 20 percent of our practice are adults, and in order to better serve our patients we have allowed for private treatment areas and flexible office hours.

Today, technological advances make orthodontics comfortable and reduce the time necessary to complete treatment. Appliances can be cosmetic and practically invisible. For patients who like to be noticed, they actually select different colors for their braces to celebrate a holiday or show their school colors. Such advances, in addition to flexible interest-free payment plans, have made orthodontics acceptable and available to everyone.

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Holistic approach to oral health

Reneida E. Reyes, DDS, MPH
Ioanna Mentzelopoulou, DDS

A recent American Academy of Pediatrics news release states that every child needs oral health risk assessment at 6 months.

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) has identified tooth decay as possibly the most common infectious disease among children, and 40 percent of U.S. children have tooth decay by the time they enter kindergarten.

Tooth decay is a disease that is preventable.

Because of how it is caused and when it begins, steps to prevent it ideally should begin prenatally and continue with the mother and young child, beginning when the infant is approximately 6 months.

The primary thrust of early risk assessment is to screen for parent-infant groups who are at risk of early childhood tooth decay (caries) and would benefit from early aggressive intervention.

The ultimate goal of early assessment is to provide timely delivery of educational information to populations at high risk for caries and to avoid the need for later aggressive intervention.

Care of the newborn should include maintenance of the mouth. It is critical to impress upon parents the need to wipe or swab the infants' gums and tongue even prior to the emergence of teeth.

The child's teeth should be brushed as soon as they erupt (twice daily, morning and evening) and the parent should begin to floss the child's teeth once daily as soon as teeth contact one another.

The average child under 6 lacks the hand-eye coordination to efficiently brush his or her teeth. Parental assistance is necessary in brushing. Use of fluoride toothpaste is essential.

Over the years, we have made great strides in the area of prevention through use of fluorides. All available statistics confirm the role of fluorides in the reduction of dental decay.

Fluoridation of the community water supply has been proven to be the most cost effective public health measure for caries control. Fluoride supplements are available for the newborn and recommended in non-fluoridated areas.

Feeding habits, particularly in the first year of life — when the child's major consumption pattern is with the use of a bottle — have a significant impact on dental health. Counseling regarding proper feeding techniques is essential to prevent "baby bottle tooth decay" (decay resulting from milk or juice having prolonged contact with teeth).

After the eruption of the first teeth, the parent should limit fruit juices to 5 ounces (bathroom-cup size) a day and preferably with meals. Sodas should be excluded from the child's diet. Infants should not be placed in bed with a bottle. If abottle is used it should contain only water (not watered-down juice).

A child should never be conditioned to associate feeding with resting. The following message is paramount for your child's oral health well being:

•Never use a bottle as a pacifier.

•Never put an infant to bed with a bottle.

•Trade in bottle for a cup at age 1.

For those parents who nurse, prolonged on-demand nursing should be discouraged. It has the same effect as bottle use.

Don't let nurturing increase your child's risk for early childhood caries.

Early childhood caries affect all cultural and economic pediatric populations.

Dental caries is an infectious disease usually passed from parent/caregiver to child from generation to generation while rendering the first feeding. For example when the parent attempts to interest the child in food, they take the spoon, put it in their mouth and say, "Yum yum yum," giving it to the child (while not realizing that they are transmitting bacteria to the child).

The bacteria responsible for tooth decay has been identified as Streptococcus Mutan. Judicious feeding patterns, fluoride intake and hygiene can decrease the level of Streptococcus Mutans present in the mouth.

Decreasing the levels in the parent's mouth before and during the colonization process, coupled with counseling to improve the diet, oral hygiene,and fluoride exposure can significantly and positively impact the child's predisposition to early childhood caries.

Dietary habits also play an important role in establishing dental health.

You have probably heard it all your life: eating sweet snacks leads to tooth decay. Sugar feeds the bacteria in your mouth and starts decay by producing enamel-destroying acids.

The plaque (sticky colonies of harmful bacteria) holds the acids to your teeth. The acids attack for at least 20 minutes after eating. The more often you eat sugary foods, the more often your teeth are attacked by the acid.

So, if you must eat sugary foods, eat them only with meals when you can clean your teeth afterwards. Dessert is legal. If sweets are consumed as part of a meal rather than an individual snack, the saliva is buffered by the presence of other food substances such as proteins and fats thereby minimizing the production of strong acids.

If you think that primary teeth are "only baby teeth. They are going to fall out anyway," think again. Parents must be aware that primary teeth serve important functions such as chewing, speech, space maintenance for permanent teeth to erupt in proper position and support of facial muscles.

When primary teeth become decayed and are left untreated, a number of unpleasant and undesirable consequences may result:

•Pain and extreme discomfort.

•Infection that can severely affect the child's general health.

•Damage to the underlying permanent teeth.

•Over-retained primary teeth can also adversely affect proper tooth alignment.

For more information, call Dr. Reyes at (718) 230-0380.

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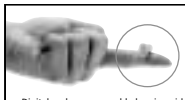
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Giant steps

New They Might Be Giants documentary reveals secrets of duo's enduring popularity

By Lisa J. Curtis
The Brooklyn Papers

The two Johns of They Might Be Giants — John Linnell and John Flansburgh — were hesitant when producer A.J. Schnack pitched the idea of making a documentary about their Williamsburg-based rock group's 20-year career.

But Los Angeles-based producer-turned-director Schnack can be persuasive — the documentary, "Gigantic: A Tale of Two Johns," is set to open in theaters on Friday, May 23.

"I've known John Flansburgh for a number of years," Schnack told GO Brooklyn last week. "So I took him out to dinner and plied him with drinks."

Sitting down for an interview at P.J. Clarke's in Manhattan, Flansburgh and Linnell recalled their apprehension.

"We were scared until we saw it," Flansburgh told GO Brooklyn. "We had very mixed feelings. We were a little scared at the beginning, but we knew A.J., and we figured he would do something interesting with it."

Schnack, 34, and Flansburgh, 43, had already collaborated on several music videos — Schnack produced and Flansburgh directed — such as the one for Ben Folds Five's "Song for the Dumped."

"It turned out great," said Linnell. "But it was a total potential loose canon. It could have been the kind of thing where we would specifically be saying in interviews, 'We're not talking about the documentary. We'll answer any other questions.'"

Flansburgh confessed his initial fear that the documentary would focus on the business side of things or draw too much attention to the individuals behind TMBG rather than the "project" itself.

"We don't even put our pictures on our album covers," stressed Flansburgh. "For us, we've never wanted to emphasize the personal part of it. It's not about our personas per se. We want people to be free to think about how unusual that song is, not go, 'That guy must be weird.'"

Flansburgh feared the documentary would feed the comparisons that are a natural result of being a duo, and he could be perceived as the less "artistic" half.

"I do a lot of the business for the band, sort of the bad cop of They Might Be Giants," said Flansburgh. "I felt personally vulnerable. In real life, those can be the best guys in an organization. I'm a responsible person. But if you're caught up in the romance of rock and roll music, being a responsible person is like a door prize.

"I'm a pretty spaced out guy … but I also have the ability to return a phone call and say 'no' in a thoughtful way … It would be easy for me to come off as the uptight guy," said Flansburgh.

"But in fact John [Linnell] writes some pop-y songs, and I write some pop-y songs; he writes crazy songs and I write some crazy songs. But the reason we've stuck together is because we have a lot more in common."

There are obvious differences between the two Johns' approaches to life however: Williamsburg resident Flansburgh was fairly prompt for our meeting, while Park Sloper Linnell was half an hour late for the 45-minute appointment; Flansburgh ordered champagne — flashing his reminder, the name and address of the restaurant written in ink on his hand, while Linnell asks for coffee and is soon muttering for a refill.

"What I like most about the film," said Flansburgh, "is that it showed our friendship. Which isn't something I was thinking about when we were making it, and it's a special thing."

CINEMA

"**Gigantic: A Tale of Two Johns**" will open at Cinema Village, 22 East 12th St. in Manhattan on May 23. Tickets are $9, $7 students with valid ID and $5.50 seniors with valid ID. For more information, call (212) 924-3363. For more information on the film, log on to www.gigantic film.com, www.theymightbegiants.com or tmbg.com.

No laughing matter

Schnack's camera followed the band around for seven months. Blending animation, live performance footage from a gig at Greenpoint's Polish National Home and interspersed readings of TMBG's often humorously bleak lyrics by comic actors Michael McKean, Janeane Garofalo and Andy Richter, Schnack has created a lighthearted, novel take on the documentary genre, which is as interesting to watch for a TMBG fan as for a Giants ignoramus.

The approach echoes TMBG's style.

"Because we have a sense of humor about what we do — albeit pretty deadpan relatively speaking — it took a very long time for critics to realize we were doing anything that was subtle or of quality," said Flansburgh. "Humor in rock music is essentially a bad idea. It's like humor in soap operas.

"We had to find a delicate balance that's about our personal sensibility, and it happens to work for us," he said. "Essentially, humor in rock music is not a good idea. We're not a good influence. But as we have existed longer and longer, critics especially, have to come to realize there's something enduring about what we do. A lot of bands have a 'to be removed by …' stamp on the front of them and certainly that was expected of us."

The documentary traces the duo from their Lincoln, Mass. junior high school to Williamsburg, to their early days as performance artists in the East Village in the 1980s, to record deals and deals gone bad, MTV videos and tours. There is also an unexpected, charming snippet of Linnell in a park with his son Henry, now 4.

Schnack believes he came to this project at exactly the right moment. In 2002, TMBG's image transitioned from cult rock status to "urban legends," as writer Michael Azerrad called them in the New Yorker. Last year, the duo won a Grammy Award for "Boss of Me," the theme song for Fox TV's "Malcolm in the Middle"; Rounder Records' released TMBG's "No!" a record for children; and Rhino Records released a retrospective box set, "Dial-A-Song."

"It's a lot like your tombstone being carved," said Flansburgh. "This is what you did. We've always tried to keep it a future-oriented project."

For the kids

Schnack credits TMBG's resurgence in popularity with the fact that their early fans are now in positions where they can hire the band for their own projects. TMBG wrote the "Doctor Evil" theme for "Austin Powers: The Spy Who Shagged Me" (1999) and contributed a full album of new material that was packaged with an issue of the literary journal "McSweeneys" in 2001.

"They're never going to quit," said Schnack. "They are always going to be a force for some level of the population. The fact that people like ['McSweeney's'] Dave Eggers and producers at 'Malcolm in the Middle' and producers at the 'Daily Show' want to work with them says a lot — and that's the first generation of those young

See ***GIANTS*** *on page* ***GO 4***



The Brooklyn Papers / Cory Morgo

Pair of Jacks: They Might Be Giants duo John Linnell (left) and John Flansburgh offer a caffeinated toast to "Gigantic: A Tale of Two Johns," a new documentary about their 20 years in the music biz.

THEATER

Puppet fest

The annual "Labapalooza! Mini Festival of New Puppet Theater" pops up at St. Ann's Warehouse (38 Water St. at Main Street in DUMBO) on May 22. The Puppet Lab, under the direction of Dan Hurlin and Theodora Skipitares, is St. Ann's platform for emerging puppet artists.



Carla Furman

The festival, divided between two programs, offers an imaginative array of stories. Program A features "Constance Holiday: Hollywood Nurse" (pictured), a dark musical portrait of Tinseltown by Ed Woodham; Amanda Maddock's "Lady Grey's Escape," in which a woman sips tea and remembers her life; Michael Kelly and Alissa Mello's "Time Flies," a dream play exploring Einstein's musings about time; and "Permanent Disruption," a miniature museum of the future in which Chris Maresca explores the manipulation of fear and constant surveillance.

Program B features Tom Lee's "The Hoplite Diary: Part II," which retells Homer's "Iliad" from the perspective of a lone Greek warrior; Richard Ebihara's "The 47th Street Hotel," a little haven on the edge of hell; and Miranda Hardy and Peter Ksander's "The Stupid Butterfly Project," a fable about a butterfly and a meteorologist.

Program A runs May 22, May 24, May 30 and June 1 at 8 pm. Program B runs May 23, May 25 and May 29-30 at 8 pm. Tickets are $20 per program or $30 for both. For tickets, call (718) 858-2424 or visit ticketweb.com. — ***Lisa J. Curtis***

FESTIVAL

Bridge b-day

A Brooklyn Bridge to the World Celebration events guide

The Brooklyn Bridge to the World Celebration, hosted by Brooklyn Borough President Marty Markowitz and honoring the 120th birthday of our most famous icon takes place on May 24. For more information, call (718) 802-3875 or visit Brooklyn-USA.org on the Web.

BIG Crossing

Beginning in City Hall park in Manhattan, cross the world famous Brooklyn Bridge and finish at Cadman Plaza Park where you'll be treated to free food and live entertainment.

- 8 am: bicyclists cross
- 9 am: runners cross
- 10 am: walk across

Free T-shirts to the first 100 registered in each group. Walkers should arrive by 9:30 am and all participants are encouraged to wear their favorite Brooklyn T-shirt or costume.

Cadman Plaza Park

Free Brooklyn shuttle loops run 11 am-5 pm from Cadman Plaza Park. All tours leave on the hour from Cadman Plaza West and Middagh Street.

- Shuttle loop to 499 Van Brunt St. for **Brooklyn Working Artists Coalition**'s spring exhibit, "Pier Show 11," and stop/pickup points at Lorraine and Columbia streets for visits to David Sharps' **Waterfront Museum**. Vintage Tours will provide free historical commentary about the history of Red Hook.
- Shuttle loop to the **Williamsburg Art & Historical Center**. Free admission.
- **Walking tour of Williamsburg** offered by Williamsburg Art & Historical Center at 1:30 pm. $10 admission.
- Shuttle loop to DUMBO's **Empire-Fulton Ferry State Park** — the center of the Celebration.
- Shuttle to Grand Army Plaza's **ARCH Gallery** and **Prospect Park** (connects to free Heart of Brooklyn shuttle to Brooklyn Botanic Garden, Brooklyn Children's Museum, Brooklyn Museum of Art, Prospect Park and Prospect Park Zoo) or **Brooklyn Academy of Music**'s Dance Africa and **Urban Glass**.

Free Brooklyn tours

- 11 am-2 pm: From Cadman Plaza West, visit the **Old Stone House**, a replica of a Dutch stone farmhouse with a very rich history. Continue with a walking tour of historic **Green-Wood Cemetery**. Tour conducted by Old Stone House Interpretive Center and the Green-Wood Historic Fund.
- 1-3 pm: From Cadman Plaza West, visit the **Wyckoff House**, which is believed to be the oldest standing house in New York State. Tour conducted by Wyckoff House.
- 1-2 pm: From Grand Army Plaza, join the **Brooklyn 101 Tour: Discover Park Slope & Prospect Heights.** Tour conducted by New York Like a Native.
- 2-3:30 pm: From Cadman Plaza West, take a walking tour of **Fort Greene & Clinton Hill**. Tour conducted by Harlem, Your Way!
- 2-3 pm: From Fulton Ferry Landing, **sail along Brooklyn's waterfront**. Special free tour guided by New York Water Taxi's own Mark Baker. Seating limited — first come, first served!
- 2-3 pm: From Cadman Plaza West, take a tour of the **Brooklyn Bridge**. Tour conducted by DayHops.
- 2:30-5:30 pm: From Cadman Plaza West, take a bus tour of **Historic Neighborhoods of Prospect Park South, Ditmas and Flatbush** — Victorian homes and mansions! Tour conducted by Brooklyn Borough Historian Ron Schweiger.
- 3-6 pm: From Cadman Plaza West, take a walking tour of **Little Odessa** in Brighton Beach. Tour conducted by Russian

See ***BRIDGE*** *on page* ***GO 4***

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Battle of Brooklyn

Heights native wins best new director for World War II epic

By Michael Wells
for The Brooklyn Papers

CINEMA

More information on "**Letters from the Dead**" can be found at the Brooklyn International Film Festival Web site. Log on to www.wbff.org and click on "2003 Films."

"When I started out this movie, I had no gray hairs," notes filmmaker Ari Taub, who now has some distinct pale tufts around his ears. "One actor put on 30 pounds, another actor went bald, another actor got a suntan, some older actor got a facelift."

The Brooklyn Heights native spent six years struggling to complete "Letters from the Dead." The final product may be the year's unlikeliest indie: a shoestring-budgeted World War II combat drama, in German and Italian, made entirely in the northeastern United States by a Jewish-American director. But something wonderful — Taub snagged the Best New Director award at the Brooklyn International Film Festival, where he premiered the movie on May 3.

Taub, 37, wrote the script with Brazilian collaborator Caio Ribeiro in 1996, began shooting in 1997 and finished last September.

"I intended to finish it in one year," says Taub. "The shooting of the movie took, like, three months [total]. But because I was only able to get enough money for a week here, and two weeks there, and three weeks there, it had to be broken up."

With a final price tag of less than a million dollars, the movie is obviously unable to compete with a "Saving Private Ryan" in spectacle or combat verisimilitude, despite the extensive participation of World War II re-enactors. Taub instead emphasizes the day-to-day lives of his soldier characters. Even more notably, those soldiers are the enemy: the film is seen through the eyes of a doomed German unit and their ragtag Italian partners in late 1944, when the Axis was already well down the long slope to defeat.

Taub used locations in upstate Harriman State Park, Massachusetts and Connecticut to stand in for the forests of northern Italy. Indoor scenes were shot on sets built out of Styrofoam at Context Studios in Williamsburg. More than a dozen German and Italian actors were flown in, repeatedly, as funds became available. They were housed in Taub's Williamsburg loft/office, where he toils at his day job running a film equipment rental company.

"I had cots and mats and all sorts of things," he said. "It was like an army camp."

Remarkably, the actors worked for free.

Universal language

"It's a dream," explains Taub. "A lot of these guys see Hollywood movies and they imagine they want to do stuff here … I [also] have a lot of Italian and German actors who are here, and they can't get decent parts in American films because they have an accent. It was like a moth to a flashlight. They knew I would appreciate them for who they are. I let them speak in their own tongue.

"They found that the way that I work is very different from the way directors from their own countries work … The Germans said that a [typical] German director doesn't really care about the emotion or what the actor's doing," he says. "'Uh, move your finger a little bit to the left. Good. Now do it again and louder.' That's the direction they would get, typically … I asked them to 'do it for me first the way that it feels for you.'"

Taub's collaborative approach to building characters was a breath of fresh air for his cast. He credits this with much of their willingness to return again and again and to soldier with him through the obstacle course of virtually no-budget filmmaking.

The director speaks little Italian or German, but found this wasn't a daunting hurdle to directing dialogue in those languages.

"You learn to communicate through your eyes," he says. "You don't understand what they're saying to you, but you can see what they're saying, you can see the emotion through them.

"When I work with the American actors, that skill doesn't work. I understand what they're saying, so suddenly it's like having a fog put up. You're listening to what they're saying and then you're not paying attention to the emotion, so it's a much harder thing to do."

The sequel

"Letters from the Dead" is just the first half of a two-part saga. An as-yet-untitled second film, penned by British writer Nick Day, will narrate events from the point of view of the opposing American unit, who in "Letters" are only occasionally seen before the climactic battle.

Taub shot the American footage at the same time and is editing now, with vague notions of a July 4 premiere.

"I want to show you two stories that end up in the same place, but that come from two totally different directions," he says, "because the enemies of one story are the heroes of another story."

He plans to cut together a one-film version, with hopes of eventual DVD and video distribution. But splitting the two halves is a practical necessity for the moment.

"My name isn't Ari Spielberg yet. When you submit a film to a festival: 'What, two and a half hours, three hours?' Unless you're established, you can't really be doing that kind of thing."

Such ambition seems to come naturally to the New York University film school graduate.

Taub recalls hearing, "'You can't do a war film!' 'What are you, insane?' Those were the first remarks. So I said, 'I'll show you' … Even when I was a student, people said, 'You can't do this,' 'You can't do that.' And I always did it. I even did a World War II film on a submarine as a student."

Axis of empathy

Other, different challenges were inherent in the film's content: a story that attempts to create empathy with enemy soldiers from two fascist regimes. Taub admits to exploiting the audience's natural sympathy for underdogs, emphasizing the desperation of the outgunned Axis soldiers and their simple desire to survive long enough to see home. But sights like an Iron Cross medal with a swastika or the Hitler salute occasionally jar the viewer out of too-easy identification.

"The moments to remind you that they're Nazis were put in deliberately, obviously, because I don't want people to forget who you're watching," he says. "I didn't want to do it in some dishonest way. I wasn't trying to rewrite history or anything like that. I was just trying to show that you can have sympathy for these guys."

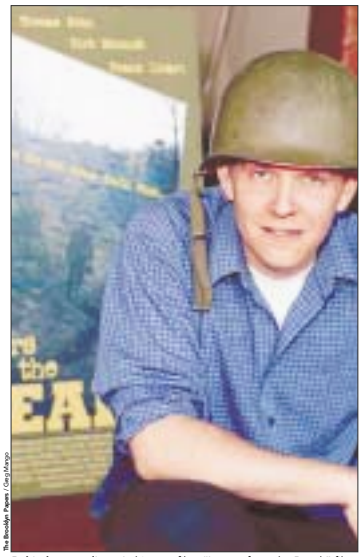
One of the festival judges took some convincing, says Taub.

"He was Jewish and he knows that I'm Jewish. He asked me, 'How could a Jew make a film like this? What kind of Jew are you?' When he found out that I had an American side to this thing, he felt differently," Taub recalls.

Still, he is sensitive of the delicate balance he has struck and is considering some further editing to the climax of "Letters from the Dead." He feels that certain subtle cues during the final showdown may be unintentionally slighting to the American soldiers.

"I'm going to make some small adjustment, because I think that it's pushing the button just a little too hard. I'm not trying to make an anti-American film here," says Taub.

"I believe a lot of people died innocently in the war whether they were American, German or Italian or whatever. They just happened to be caught up in something that was much larger than them."



The Brooklyn Papers / Gary Metzger

Behind enemy lines: In his new film, "Letters from the Dead," filmmaker Ari Taub focuses on a doomed unit of German and Italian soldiers in late-1944 Italy.

WHERE TO GO

compiled by Susan Rosenthal

THURS, MAY 22

FLOWER WORKSHOP: Horticultural Society of New York hosts a talk on how to plant and transform your garden. Children and adults welcome. Gloves and tools provided. 3 to 4:30 pm. Brooklyn Public Library, Park Slope branch, 431 Sixth Ave. (212) 757-0915. **Free.**

LAWN CARE: Brooklyn Botanic Garden talk, "Summertime... and the Lawncare is Easy." 5:30 to 7:30 pm. 1000 Washington Ave. (718) 623-7220. **Free.**

PIERS 6-12: Public meeting with Port Authority over development of Piers 6-12. 6:30 pm. Miccio PAL Center, 110 W. 9th St., Red Hook. **Free.**

BUSINESS TALK: Assemblyman Hikind, State Senator Parker and Councilmen Felder and DeBlasio host a talk "Build Your Business From A to NYC." 6:30 pm. Boro Park Y, 4910 14th Ave. (718) 853-3981. **Free.**

BASIC JUDAISM: Congregation B'nai Avraham talk, "Jewish Home: How is it Different?" 6:30 to 8 pm. 117 Remsen St. (718) 596-4840. **Free.**

BARGEMUSIC: chamber music by Mozart, von Biber and Stravinsky. $35. 7:30 pm. Fulton Ferry Landing. (718) 624-2083.

DANCEWAVE: Kids Company performs works by Mark Morris, Doug Varone, Donald Byrd and more. $16 adults, $12 kids 12 and under. 7:30 pm. Picnic House, Prospect Park. (718) 622-2548.

SPRING FEVER: Brooklyn Lyceum presents Blum Dance Theater in "Egg, My Mother's Eye Ball." $12. 9 pm. Also, Delphina Orchestra performs big band music. $12. 10 pm. Also, "Random Violence," a one-act nightmare. $12. 7:30 pm. 227 Fourth Ave. (347) 683-7698.

LOW BAR: Babylon Jazz Assault. No cover. 10 pm. 81 Washington St. (718) 222-1LOW.

ST. ANN'S WAREHOUSE: "Labapalooza" puppets. Program A. 8 pm. See Sat.

FRI, MAY 23

Memorial Day Weekend

BRIDGE WALK: Big Onion Tours takes a walk over the Brooklyn Bridge and through Brooklyn Heights. $12, $10 students and seniors. 1 pm. Meet at southeast corner of Broadway and Chambers Street, lower Manhattan. (212) 439-1090.

INSTALLATION: New exhibit at 354 Exhibitions entitled "InX-teriors." 4 to 8 pm. 354 Degraw St. (718) 625-3839. **Free.**

BOOK SIGNING: Hope Clarke, author of "Shadow Lover," "Bestseller" and "Not With My Son" reads from her books. 6 to 8 pm. Nubian Heritage Bookstore, 570 Fulton St. (718) 797-4400. **Free.**

DANCE AFRICA: Brooklyn Academy of Music hosts 26th annual event. Program explores dance, music, film and culture of the African Diaspora. $38, $28, $18, children 16 and under: $19, $14, $9. 7:30 pm. BAM Opera House, 30 Lafayette Ave. (718) 636-4100.

BARGEMUSIC: chamber music by Mozart, von Biber and Stravinsky. $35. 7:30 pm. Fulton Ferry Landing. (718) 624-2083.

GALAPAGOS ART SPACE: Gold Sparkle Trio CD release party. $7. 7:30 pm. Also, Qatsi. $6. 10:30 pm. 70 North Sixth St. (718) 782-5188.

LUXX CAFE: Music group Eyes Like Knives performs. $5. 8 pm. 256 Grand St. (718) 599-1000.

TWO BOOTS: Night Wigga plays African rhythms. No cover. 10 pm to midnight. 514 Second St. (718) 499-3253.

ST. ANN'S WAREHOUSE: "Labapalooza" puppets. Program B. 8 pm. See Sat., May 24.

ADULT CLASSES: Mark Morris Dance Center offers summer classes in ballet, modern dance, beginner West-African rhythms, pilates and yoga. Call for info. 3 Lafayette Ave. (718) 624-8400.

SAT, MAY 24

OUTDOORS AND TOURS

BROOKLYN BRIDGE CELEBRATION: 120th birthday of the bridge. See story on page GO1. (718) 802-3875. WWW.BROOKLYN-USA.ORG **Free.**

BRIDGE WALK: Adventure on a Shoestring takes a walk over the Brooklyn Bridge. $5. Noon. Meet at corner of Chambers and Centre streets, lower Manhattan. (212) 265-2663.

CANOE THE CREEK: Join Rangers in exploring the Salt Marsh by canoe. 11 am and 1 pm. 3302 Ave. U. Reservations necessary. (866) NYC-HAWK. **Free.**

PIER SHOW 11: Brooklyn Working Artists Coalition presents its annual art show. Noon to 6 pm. 499 Van Brunt St. (718) 596-2507. **Free.**

PERFORMANCES

DANCE AFRICA: Brooklyn Academy of Music hosts its 26th annual event. Program explores dance, music, film and culture of the African Diaspora. $38, $28, $18, children 16 and under: $19, $14, $9. 2 and 7:30 pm. BAM Opera House, 30 Lafayette Ave. (718) 636-4100.

BARGEMUSIC: all-Mozart. $35. 7:30 pm. Also, free midday concert. 1 pm. Fulton Ferry Landing. (718) 624-2083.

ST. ANN'S WAREHOUSE: "Labapalooza" festival of new puppet theater. Program A includes "Constance Holliday: Hollywood Nurse," a musical portrait of tinsel town. $20. 8 pm. 38 Water St. (718) 858-2424.

COMEDY: Brooklyn Lyceum presents "Blue: A Comedy About Death and Loss." $12. 9:30 pm. 227 Fourth Ave. (347) 683-7698.

BREW-HA-HA: Comedy at The Boudoir Bar. $5 admission and two-drink minimum. 9:30 pm. 273 Smith St. (718) 624-8878.

LOW BAR: Kooshija, Qaze, Uloop and others perform. 10 pm. No cover. 81 Washington St. (718) 222-1LOW.

CHILDREN

BARNES AND NOBLE: The Wild Thing, from the children's book "Where the Wild Things Are," makes a story time appearance. 11 am. 106 Court St. (718) 246-4158. **Free.**

BROOKLYN CHILDREN'S MUSEUM: "Dinosaurs!" robotic exhibit of prehistoric proportions opens. 12-foot tall Tyrannosaurus Rex, Chasmosaurus, Pteranodon and more. On exhibit through Sept. 2. $5. 2 to 5 pm. Dinosaur dig from 2:30 to 3:30 pm. Also, celebrate National Dance Month with a freestyle tap performance by Roxanne Butterfly and her cast of dancers. 2:30 pm. Members only opening preview 10 am to noon. 145 Brooklyn Ave. (718) 735-4400.

PUPPETWORKS: "Cinderella." $6,

Continued on page GO 4...

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Discovery channel

New plays see the light in the Players' Black Box festival

By Paulanne Simmons
for The Brooklyn Papers

From September through May, the Gallery Players' stage is devoted to revivals of classic and contemporary plays and musicals. But in June, the stage is turned over to emerging playwrights from all over the tri-state area.

The Black Box New Plays Festival, now in its sixth year, provides workshop environments for playwrights, who work in collaboration with directors, actors and producers. This year, Heather Curran became the producer of the festival after Sidney Fortner stepped down due to other commitments.

"We've really focused this year on play development," said Curran, who has both acted and directed with the Gallery Players several times and is now a member of the board. "Every playwright will come in at a different stage in development. We are interested in working with playwrights who are interested in working on their plays. The festival is a culmination of this work."

Each weekend, from May 29 through June 22, a separate "box" is administered by its own dramaturge, who ensures each box is what Curran calls "a cohesive evening of theater," and plays are grouped appropriately.

Dramaturges also act as liaisons between playwrights and director.

"The dramaturge makes sure that what the playwright has to say is up there on the stage," says Curran.

Over the years, several playwrights have established an ongoing relationship with the festival.

Joe Lauinger, a 55-year-old professor of dramatic literature at Sarah Lawrence College, has had a play in the Black Box series every year of its existence.

"I like the people and the respect they give the playwright," he says.

This year, Lauinger's full-length "Holy Child" will be presented in Box 1 (May 29 - June 1) and his two one-acts, "Mushroom Pie" and "Fish Pond," will be presented in Box 4 (June 19-22).

"Holy Child" is about an alcoholic Italian-American priest who goes to the Holy Child home to be rehabilitated.

In Act I, he meets his three brothers, a lawyer, a neighborhood businessman and a high school basketball coach and womanizer. In Act II, his brothers visit the home.

"It's about family love and the ways in which one finds how to believe in life again," explains Lauinger.

"Holy Child" began life as a one-act, but after its initial reading, director Heather Curran suggested the piece might be developed into a full-length play.

"We worked on it, and it grew into a well-crafted piece," says Lauinger. "I couldn't have done it without Heather."

"Mushroom Pie," which Lauinger calls "a send-up of the yuppie lifestyle," is about a couple that finds a special mushroom and cooks up the perfect dish with it.

"The Fish Pond" is about a couple that disagrees over what they see and what they don't see in a fish pond. Both one-acts are directed by Jonathan Summey.

Staci Sweeden is now in her fifth year with Black Box. "Requiescut In Pace (R.I.P.)" in Box 2 (June 5-8), directed by Matt Schicker, is about a young girl who orchestrates the funeral of her parakeet, and her divorced parents who unexpectedly meet at the funeral.

"Deux Femmes, Un Homme," about a dinner party among close friends, and "Good Vibrations," about three women, sex and a writers' colony in Florida, are both in Box 3 (June 5-8) and are both directed by Yvonne Conybeare.

"She's directed many of my pieces," says Sweeden, who is also a visiting guest artist at the Stanford Center for the Arts. "As long as she's willing to direct my pieces, I'm willing to return, because she's so good at it."

This is the second year for Joshua Scher, 27, whose one-act, "Flushed," a comedy that takes place in the men's room of the Peter Luger Steak House in Williamsburg, will be presented in Box 3 (June 12-15).

Scher says he is grateful for the space and the community provided by the Gallery Players.

"It's a great place to have a production. And productions are always helpful," he says.

Curran believes what makes the Black Box Festival special is its focus on the process.

"In other festivals, playwrights send the play in, get to come on opening night and may or may not like what they see. We focus on meeting, interviewing and talking to the playwright. We give readings. We get feedback. Dramaturges get involved very early in the process, even helping to select directors," says Curran.

For Sweeden, however, it's all about leadership and meeting the "challenge to keep things fresh, moving forward and new."

Surely, many theater-goers will agree that at a time when most commercial theater is unwilling to take risks with new work, it's a pleasure to see a group willing to take a step into the void.

THEATER

The Gallery Players presents the **Black Box New Plays Festival**, May 29-June 22, at 199 14th St. between Fourth and Fifth avenues in Park Slope. Performances are Thursdays through Saturdays, at 8 pm, and Sundays, at 3 pm. Tickets are $15 for adults, $13 for children under 12 and seniors. A festival pass is available for $20. For reservations, call (718) 595-0547.



Mark Schicker

What's new: Six of more than 50 Gallery Players actors, (clockwise from upper left) D.H. Johnson, Kathy Cortez, James Douherty, Tia Shearer, Heidi Carafano and Jill MacLean, who will perform in the 2003 Black Box New Plays Festival.





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Rafael de Soto (American, born Spain, 1904-1967). *Blood on My Doorstep*. Oil on canvas, reproduced on cover of *New Detective Magazine*, July 1946. Collection of Robert Lesser.

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The exhibition is made possible, in part, by the Third Millennium Foundation and by AOL Time Warner Book Group. Additional support is provided by Steve Kennedy and Mr. and Mrs. Andrew J. Sordoni III.

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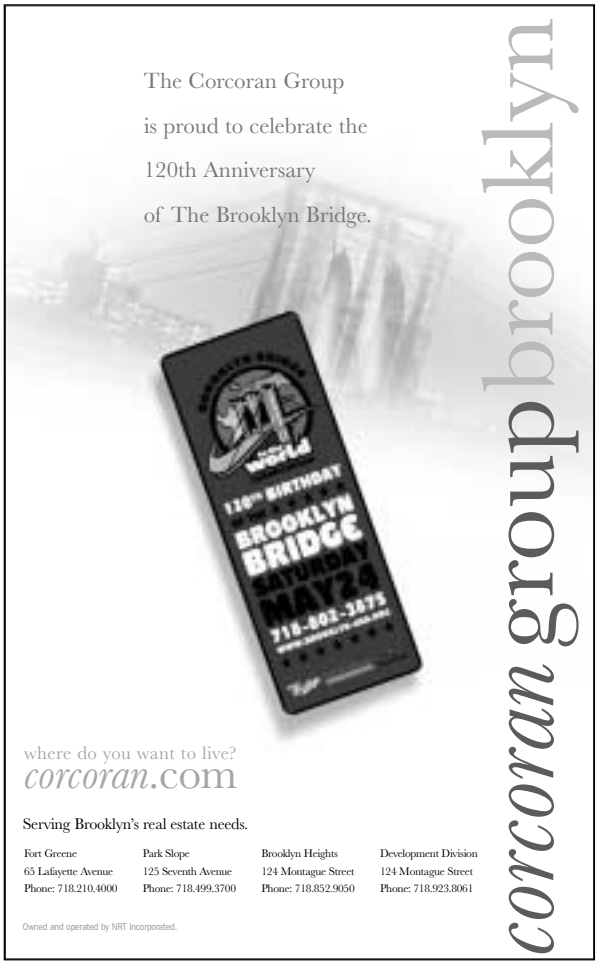
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Through June 15, 2003

Alice Neel (1900-1984). *Sigrid Holmquist Resting*, 1964. Oil on canvas, 50 x 34 in. (127 x 86.4 cm). Purchased with funds given by Mr. and Mrs. Robert Meyer and Mrs. Joan Bernhard in memory of Dr. Richard Meyer and Dr. Rachel Meyer and the Dorothy Braudo Memorial Fund. 72.191. © The Estate of Alice Neel. Courtesy The Robert Miller Gallery, New York.

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BRIDGE...

Continued from page GO 1

America.

• 4-5 pm: From Brooklyn Arch [TK!!] on the **Brooklyn Bridge** learn from a photographer who has climbed 15 New York bridges and will show and tell you all about the world's most famous bridge! Tour conducted by Dave Frieder, aka Dave the Bridge Man.

Coney Island

From 11 am to 5 pm, shuttle on Coney Island's **Surf Avenue** between the New York Aquarium and Keyspan Park — continuous loop around the Coney Island fun spots! (Pickup shuttle outside New York Aquarium and Keyspan Park on Surf Avenue.)

Cadman Plaza Park

Free events throughout the day in Cadman Plaza Park:

• 11 am: **Sesame Flyers Steel Band**
• Noon: **EBC Bushwick Steppers**
• 2 pm: the 3rd U.S. Infantry — **Old Guard**. U.S. Army's official ceremonial unit from the nation's capitol. Revolutionary dress.
• 2:30 pm: **Kings Chorus Barbershop Harmony**
• 3 pm: **Heart & Soul** — Brooklyn Doo-wop
• 4 pm: **Paprika** — Afro-Brazilian-reggae band
• 5 pm: Stage closes — evening party continues at Empire-Fulton Ferry State Park.

Empire-Fulton Ferry State Park

Located on Water Street between Main and New Dock streets, the events on this stage will be emceed by Todd Robbins, the "Coney Island Ambassador." Note: all performance acts and times subject to change.

• Noon: the 3rd U.S. Infantry — **Old Guard** — U.S. Army's official ceremonial unit from the nation's capitol. Revolutionary dress.
• 12:30 pm: see the **West Indian Day Parade** costumed performers.
• 1 pm: "Art and Science of **Bridge Building**: The Great Suspension Bridge — A Case History." Dan Wiley, in association with the Brooklyn Center for the Urban Environment, is calling all kids, and grownups, too, to help him build the Brooklyn Bridge on stage in this unique, hands-on, human bridge-building project.
• 1:30 pm: Brooklyn rock band **Daphne**.
• 2 pm & 4 pm: Central Park Swedish Cottage Marionette Theater Puppets in the Parks presents **"Sleeping Beauty."**
• 3 pm: the dance, theatre and spoken word of **Creative Outlet**.
• 4 pm: Brooklyn's Big Band — **Dem Brooklyn Bums** — back from their "EURO tour."
• 5 pm: Brooklyn doo-wop with **Heart & Soul**.
• 6:30 pm: Brooklyn **Poets Praise the Bridge** — Brooklyn Poet Laureate Ken Siegelman, Daniela Gioseffi, Maurice Edwards and Wanda Phipps.
• 7:15 pm: Sunset concert with the **Brooklyn Philharmonic**, conducted by Edward Outwater.
• 8:15 pm: "Happy Birthday Brooklyn Bridge!" An architectural wonder of a cake made by **CakeMan Raven** of Fort Greene and 120 candles by Grucci.
• 8:30 pm: A spectacular **laser & light show** on a six-story, 100-foot-wide screen created by Image Engineering.
• 9 pm: The legendary **Johnny Maestro and The Brooklyn Bridge**.
• 10 pm: "Brooklyn Bridge After-Party" — Southpaw presents **Beetroot** plus other performers.
• 10:45 pm: Late **Laser Light Spectacle**.

Additional events

At Empire-Fulton Ferry State Park:

• 10 am-5 pm: The Brooklyn Bridge Troupe — Enjoy the **strolling, costumed actors** who will be delighted to let you take photos with them!
• Noon-5 pm: Hands on! Use a real spud wrench and work with **Brooklyn Bridge nuts and bolts**. Souvenir nuts and bolts given out until they run out! Iron Workers Local 361.
• Noon-5 pm: Hall of Cultural Enrichment — Brooklyn's arts and cultural institutions **show and tell** their summer events and programs.
• 1 pm: **Workshop** with Central Park Swedish Cottage Marionette Theater Puppets in the Parks. Learn how to make puppets come to life.
• 2 pm & 3 pm: "The Brooklyn Bridge: A Study in Greatness" with Carrie Wilson and John Stern, Aesthetic Realism consultants. What makes the Bridge beautiful and loved by millions is explained in this exciting **slide talk**.
• 2:30 pm: The **Brooklyn Ballet**, which performs a fusion of contemporary, baroque and modern dance, will perform excerpts from "Mystery Sonatas," choreographed by Lynn Parkerson.

Photography contest

Brooklyn Bridge to the World Amateur Photography Contest invites contestants to take the best and most unique photograph (a) of the bridge, (b) from the bridge or (c) of people on the bridge.

Three adult winners (18 and older) and three youth winners (17 and younger), one in each category, will each win a new Nikon camera and have their work featured on Best of Brooklyn postcards to be sold to benefit the not-for-profit Best of Brooklyn Inc.

Entry forms available only at the Celebration. (Pictures must be taken between May 24 and June 30, 2003. Winners announced July 2003.)

GIANTS...

Continued from page GO 1

kids to grow up and want to do something with them.

"Now they're doing kids records. Now 3-year-olds know They Might Be Giants. They're set for another 30 years!" (The prolific output continues: The Johns hope their new children's book and CD "Bed, Bed, Bed" will hit stores this fall.)

In "Gigantic," it becomes clear that part of their longevity in the biz is due to their pioneering embrace of technology to keep in touch with their fans. Schnack credits them with being among the first to use technology, from answering machines to music videos to the Internet, enabling the band to work outside of the traditional record label marketing formula.

Flansburgh's proud of their special brand of success.

"It's a good story to tell for people who think of our culture as becoming overwhelmingly corporate," he said. "I don't watch 'American Idol' but I can tell that there's an aspect to our culture that's moving away from people doing things because they're into it and they love it and people looking to be made — someone else has to come along and make them a star and make them into an artist.

"That's your own decision to make," Flansburgh said. "If you want to make music, you can make music. The people who make careers in music, have that in themselves. If you need a company to back you up in order to feel like it's worth going on, you have the wrong attitude for survival."

In "Gigantic," TMBG fans will be tickled seeing Flansburgh recording a song directly into the Dial-A-Song Record-A-Call in his office. (The phone number, which they advertised in the Village Voice classifieds in the early days, became legendary.)

Schnack said he was initially surprised to learn that They Might Be Giants came out of the 1980s East Village scene.

"It makes perfect sense, of course, that they're performance artists," said Schnack. "They came from a world where the rules were thrown out — it seems totally obvious in retrospect. One of the reasons they have been around for so long is that their own personal vision and idea was the most important thing to them."

In "Gigantic," it appears the TMBG fan base isn't full of 40-somethings who have been trailing the band for 20 years, but that they constantly attract young fans.

"What's great about kids in high school and college — what attracts them to They Might Be Giants — is that it's their discovery period for music," said Schnack. "Kids, when they have a serious time in life, are looking for artists that they really respect … so they are drawn to this band that's filled with stuff that's not in the traditional pop music landscape."

"We've had a very stumbling, mumbling, bumbling career," said Flansburgh. "We do unusual kinds of music and we've had some success and some things that weren't so successful. We're an original band and original bands don't always fare so well.

"If you're doing something in a more artistic, abstract way, you'll probably have some success but not consistently," he said, adding, "We don't mind the roller coaster ride."

WHERE TO GO...

Continued from page GO 2...

$7 adults. 12:30 and 2:30 pm. 338 Sixth Ave. (718) 965-3391.

OTHER

PHOTO EXHIBIT: Brooklyn Papers photographer Tom Callan will have 26 of his photographs featuring the Brooklyn Bridge and the waterfront on display at the 66 Water Street Bar & Restaurant through June. Artist's reception begins at 7 pm. 66 Water St. at Main Street in DUMBO. (718) 625-9352.

WRITING IN THE GARDEN: "Writing Spring" is a full day retreat in Brooklyn Botanic Garden. Choose a tree or flower to write and draw about. $60. 10 am to 4 pm. Zen Center of New York City, 500 State St. (718) 875-8229.

DANCE AFRICA BAZAAR: Adjacent to parking lot of Brooklyn Academy of Music. Global marketplace of African, Caribbean and African-American food, fashion, artifacts and jewelry. Noon to 10 pm. 30 Lafayette Ave. (718) 636-4100.

ART SHOW: Exhibit features work of art "Epitome, 2002." 1 to 6 pm. Gilbert Joseph Alexander Gallery, 209 Underhill Ave. (718) 783-7062. **Free.**

RECEPTION: Kentler International Drawing Space presents "Site Maps - Red Hook," by Jane Ingram Allen. 2 pm. 353 Van Brunt St. (718) 875-2098. **Free.**

SUN, MAY 25

OUTDOORS AND TOURS

GREEN-WOOD CEMETERY: Tour and talk about Green-Wood's historical, sociological, architectural, artistic, horticultural and theatrical appeal. $6. 1 pm. Meet inside main entrance at Fifth Avenue and 25th Street. (718) 469-5277.

PERFORMANCES

SPRING FEST: Brooklyn Botanic Garden presents The Lost Bayou Ramblers at 3 pm and folk-rock with Lucy Kaplansky at 4:30 pm. $5. 1000 Washington Ave. (718) 623-7333.

BARGEMUSIC: Chamber music program of all-Mozart. $35. 4 pm. Fulton Ferry Landing. (718) 624-2083.

BARBES BAR: Music with Josh Roseman. No cover. 8 pm. 376 Ninth St. (718) 965-9177.

BACH AT ZION: "Guitar X 2", a presentation of music through the ages on lute and guitar including Scottish dances, Brazilian duos and Domeniconi suite written for the duo. 4 pm. Lefferts Historic House in Prospect Park. (718) 789-2822 ext. 10. **Free.**

DANCE AFRICA: Brooklyn Academy of Music hosts its 26th annual event. 3 pm. See Sat.

ST. ANN'S WAREHOUSE: "Labapalooza" puppet theater. Program B. 3 pm. See Sat.

CHILDREN

PUPPETWORKS: "Cinderella." 12:30 and 2:30 pm. See Sat.

OTHER

MEMORIAL SERVICE: Commemoration of Memorial Day. 10 am. Trinity Lutheran Church, 9020 Third Ave.

LECTURE SERIES: Brooklyn Public Library series on Jews and the Media. Today: "A Lecture and Slide Show." 2 pm. Brooklyn Public Library, Central branch, Grand Army Plaza. (718) 230-2100. **Free.**

SUNDAYS ON MYRTLE: Lecture and demo on photography. Topic is "How to Move From a Hobby to a Business in the Creative Arts." $15. 4 to 6 pm. Clinton Hill Simply Art and Framing Gallery, 583 Myrtle Ave. (718) 624-5041.

OCULARIS FILM: Cinema Williamsburg Style presents "A Floating World." $6. 7 pm. 70 North Sixth St. (718) 782-5188.

HALCYON CAFE: presents Space Crafte One Live. 7 pm to midnight. No cover. 227 Smith St. (718) 260-WAXY.

LUXX BAR: Music with Navy, the Somnabulants and others. 256 Grand St. (718) 599-1000.

DANCE AFRICA BAZAAR: Adjacent to parking lot of Brooklyn Academy of Music. Noon to 8 pm. See Sat.

MON, MAY 26

Memorial Day

PARADE: Bay Ridge Memorial Day Parade. Third Avenue at 79th Street to Cannonball Park. Starts at 11 am.

OBSERVANCE: Memorial Day ceremony held at The Anthony Mondello Triangle. 10:30 am. 72nd Street and Eighth Avenue. (718) 633-9303.

TOUR: Urban Park Rangers tours Salt Marsh Nature Center and discuss its displays. Learn about history of Marine Park and Gerritsen Beach. 2 to 4 pm. 3302 Ave. U. (718) 421-2021. **Free.**

LECTURE: Congregation B'nai Avraham series, "Ethics of Our Fathers." Today: "Anger Management." 8 pm. 117 Remsen St. (718) 802-1827. **Free.**

BARBES BAR: Traveling Cinema Film Series presents "Todos Santos Cuchumatan: Report from Guatemalan Village" (1982). 9 pm. 376 Ninth St. (718) 965-9177. **Free.**

GALAPAGOS ART SPACE: Evening of burlesque. 9:30 pm. No cover. 70 North Sixth St. (718) 782-5188.

TUES, MAY 27

BARNES AND NOBLE: book discussion. This month's selection is "This Bitter Earth," by Bernice McFadden. 7 pm. 106 Court St. (718) 246-4996. **Free.**

SPRING FEVER: Brooklyn Lyceum presents Traci Lynn Smith at 7 pm; All is Full of Love at 8 pm and Blue at 9:30 pm. $12. 227 Fourth Ave. (347) 683-7698.

MEETING: Bay Ridge Community Council. 7 pm. McKinley IS, 7301 Fort Hamilton Parkway. (718) 447-6488.

MEETING: 62nd Precinct Community Council. 7:30 pm. Bath Avenue and Bay 22nd Street. (718) 236-2501.

HALCYON CAFE: Rub-a-Dub night with Natty Dread and Bastard Jazz. 9 pm to 1 am. No cover. 227 Smith St. (718) 260-WAXY.

MOTHERS OF MULTIPLES: Maimonides Medical Center offers a talk "How to Say No to Your Kids and Have Them Love You For It." 8 to 10 pm. 4802 Tenth Ave. room 2C. (212) 963-8940. **Free.**

GALAPAGOS ART SPACE: A.V. Club. $5. 8:30 pm. Also, Klezmer Tuesdays at 8:30 pm. No cover. 70 North Sixth St. (718) 782-5188.

MUSIC: Brooklyn Jugs blues and jug music. No cover. 9 to 11 pm. Sparky's Ale House, 481 Court St. (718) 596-1940, ext. 24.

ROCK CONCERT: The Kamikaze Hearts will perform their upstate porch rock at M Shanghai Den. $3. 8 pm. 129 Havemeyer St. at Grand Street. (718) 384-9300.

WEDS, MAY 28

FILM: The Watch Club hosts "The Remains of the Day" (1993). 2 pm. 157 Montague St. (718) 875-6960. **Free.**

MEDITATION: Learn sahaja yoga. 6:30 pm. Brooklyn Public Library, Carroll Gardens branch, 396 Clinton St. (718) 833-5751. **Free.**

CONCERT: David Boody Intermediate School 228 presents its concert bands, string orchestras, electronic keyboard ensembles and vocal choruses. $7. 7 pm. 228 Ave. S. (718) 375-7635.

BROOKLYN CINEMA: Park Slope Civic Council presents "Made in Brooklyn," a celebration of movies made in Brooklyn. Spike Lee's "Mo' Better Blues" is featured. 7 to 10 pm. Congregation Beth Elohim, Eighth Avenue and Garfield Place. Call. (718) 832-8227.

DISCIPLINE TALK: Maimonides Medical Center talk on appropriate ways to discipline your child. 7 pm. 4802 Tenth Ave. (718) 748-1234. **Free.**

SPRING FEVER: Brooklyn Lyceum presents Groundwork with Andersen Gabrych at 7 pm; All is Full of Love at 8 pm and Blue at 9:30 pm. $12. 227 Fourth Ave. (347) 683-7698.

SPIRITUAL ACTIVISM: Brooklyn Society for Ethical Culture offers a talk "The Role of Contemplation in a Time of Crisis." $10, $7 members. 7:30 to 9:30 pm. 53 Prospect Park West. (718) 783-2298.

GALAPAGOS ART SPACE: M in M Musicians in Masques with Faith Fearless. $10, $8 students and seniors. 8 pm. Also, Citigrass plays Bluegrass. No cover. 8:30 pm. 70 North Sixth St. (718) 782-5188.

LOW BAR: presents a variety of guests including dancers, conjurer Russello and Curtis Eller's American Circus. No cover. 8 pm. 81 Washington St. (718) 222-LOW.

NATIONAL SENIOR FITNESS DAY: YWCA is a host site for the 10th annual National Senior Health and Fitness Day featuring a day of classes. Open to people 50 and over. 30 Third Ave. (718) 875-1190, ext. 225. **Free.**

THURS, MAY 29

BLOOD PRESSURE SCREENING: at Maimonides Medical Center. 10:30 am to 2 pm. 950 49th St. (718) 283-6180. **Free.**

PUBLIC HEARING: NYC Charter Revision Commission presents a forum on "Agency Organization/ Reducing Size of Government Forum." 4 pm. St. Francis College, 181 Remsen St. (212) 676-2060.

CHANCELLOR RECEPTION: Meet Chancellor Joel Klein during a reception for the PTA of PS 29. 6 pm. 425 Henry St. (718) 330-9277. **Free.**

PARTY: The Parkside School, PS 130, will commemorate its 100th year with an "International Birthday Party," featuring an art exhibit, refreshments and student performances. 6 to 8:30 pm. 70 Ocean Parkway. (718) 330-9350. **Free.**

BASIC JUDAISM: Congregation B'nai Avraham offers a talk "How the Talmud Thinks" 6:30 to 8 pm. 117 Remsen St. (718) 596-4840. **Free.**

BARNES AND NOBLE: Open mic poetry. 6 pm. 267 Seventh Ave. (718) 832-9066. **Free.**

SMALL BUSINESS TALK: Business Outreach Center Network offers a talk "The Road to Financial Success: Financing Fundamentals for Small Business." 6 to 8:30 pm. 85 S. Oxford St. (718) 624-9115. **Free.**

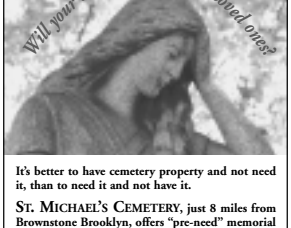
MILITARY CINEMA NIGHT: Monthly discussion series focusing on history through film. Featured film is "All Quiet on the Western Front." 7 pm. Fort Hamilton, 101st Street

Continued on page GO 7...



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Pirkei Avos – Ethics of our Fathers
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Monday Evenings 8:00-9:00pm
NO FEE
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Magical history tour

Red Dive takes audiences on a theatrical trip down the Gowanus

By Paulanne Simmons
for The Brooklyn Papers

For many of us growing up in Brooklyn, the Gowanus Canal was a place to avoid. But this area has a long and venerable history, and its residents have mixed feelings about its present condition and a variety of opinions about its future.

"Peripheral City: Rediscovering the Gowanus Canal," a multimedia performing arts event that includes music, dance and a boat trip down the canal, attempts to set in relief the many faces of this long-neglected neighborhood.

THEATER

Red Dive presents "**Peripheral City: Rediscovering the Gowanus Canal**" tours every hour between noon and 5 pm, May 24-May 26 and May 31-June 1. Tours meet at 400 Carroll St., between Bond Street and the canal. Tickets are $20. For reservations, call (212) 615-6797.

The event, which runs May 24 through May 26 and May 31 through June 1, is produced by Red Dive, a collective of four independent dance and theater artists: Maureen Brennan, Ellen Baird, Kerry Lowe and Ashley Smith.

"We create large-scale events, as well as more intimate events," said Brennan, the director of "Peripheral City." "We work with artists from a lot of different disciplines, including sculptors, architects, sense artists — such as food artists — and place them in a context other than traditional venues."

Since its inception in 1996, Red Dive has produced events such as "Inhabited: Afterlives" and "Inhabited: Ghosts of Home," two intimate performance-installation tours of the Lower East Side Tenement Museum, and in Brooklyn, "Pool," a series of live music and performance pieces at a freshwater bog created from an oil-changing pit in an old Williamsburg garage.

"We were drawn to the Gowanus Canal because it's in a fragile, transitory stage," said Brennan. "There are so many different faces and opinions interacting about the future of the canal — everything from paving it over to returning it to its natural wetland state."

"Peripheral City" begins at 400 Carroll St., between Bond Street and the canal, where Matt Callinan has created a 50-foot nylon tunnel that visitors walk through before boarding the 16-seat pontoon boat that will take them down the canal. Marilys Ernst has furnished the tunnel with a sound installation that combines taped interviews with residents, ambient canal sounds and musical compositions.

"The tunnel represents the new life brought to the canal by the flushing tunnel, which is pumping in fresh water," Brennan explained.

The boat is piloted by eco-guide, Captain Bill Sheehan.

"We bring in people who may not be artists, but who are creators in their own fields," said Brennan.

On the way out, Sheehan explains how the canal ended up in its present state of decay.

By the latter part of the 19th century, the Gowanus Canal, extending from Hamilton Avenue to Douglass Street, and lined with industrial enterprises including coal, lumber, brick and stone yards; foundries; electroplating shops; flour, plaster and paper mills; and an early purveyor of household heating and cooking gas had contributed greatly to the commercial and industrial development of Red Hook.

But as early as 1893, the Daily Eagle would call the canal an open cesspool. In the succeeding decades neither the natural tides nor a 6,250-foot flushing terminal connecting the canal to the Buttermilk Channel were effective in ridding it of pollutants. And in the early 1960s, the canal further declined with the advent of containerized shipping.

Today, even with the restoration of the flushing tunnel in 1999, the canal and its surrounding area are largely unused and underdeveloped.

For Red Dive, it is not only the physical environment, but also the human side of the Gowanus Canal that is so fascinating.

"['Peripheral City'] invites people to think how art can be useful to explore day-to-day drama in the environment and its history," said Brennan.

The first stop on the ride is at Fourth Street, where Jill Sigman performs a dance-theater piece "manipulating the myths about mob activities around the canal, set to the music of Fred Wright's horn," said Brennan. "She's created a distorted and haunting character using the body to suggest the dark side of the myth."

Further along, on the Ninth Street Bridge and at a driveway just south of the bridge, two female and two male dancers will perform choreography by Ashley Smith.

In the driveway, dancers represent an upper class couple coming to the neighborhood to buy drugs from a dealer and a prostitute.

"It's a glimpse into their lives, but it's not meant to be realistic," said Smith. "It's more like a dream sequence. It's violent and over the top."

On the bridge, the dancers wear orange jumpsuits and white hardhats; their movements are more abstract.

Both dances are set to an Ernst soundscape.

"I used the voices as though they were instruments, and I arranged music to interface with the things they were saying," said Ernst. "I created vocal collages based on thematic material."

Ernst not only intervowe the music of a cello, violin, cornet and drum, but also recorded sounds when she was on the canal — even an ice cream truck because there's an ice cream company nearby — and actually got the Ninth Street Bridge operator to blow the horn that warns people the bridge is opening, so she could record it.

At the Ninth Street Bridge, the boat runs around and heads back.

"The Department of Transportation wouldn't open the bridge five times a day [for each tour]," said Brennan. "If they opened the bridge so many times, it would require extra staff, which they couldn't provide. They loved the idea, but they said, 'No.'"

On the way back, the tone becomes more upbeat and optimistic. Captain Sheehan tells his captive audience that the canal is becoming a venue for new life and hope.

"Rafael Sanchez will appear as a poetic interpretation of 'Miss Gowanus' performed behind a painted cutout set," said Brennan.

On the Carroll Street Bridge, the Gowanus Wildcats, a drill team composed of 8- to 16-year-old girls from the Gowanus Houses, will perform dances and drills.

"Peripheral City" is part documentary, part theater and part adventure. But most of all, it is a celebration of what the canal is and what it can be.


Ashley Smith


Brian McAvoy

There s(he) is: (Above) Rafael Sanchez as Miss Gowanus in a scene from Red Dive's outdoor performance piece "Peripheral City: Rediscovering the Gowanus Canal." (At left) The Gowanus Wildcats drill team will also perform as part of this multimedia performance art project.

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To Share / Brooklyn

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Wanted / Brooklyn

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For Sale / New Jersey



R22

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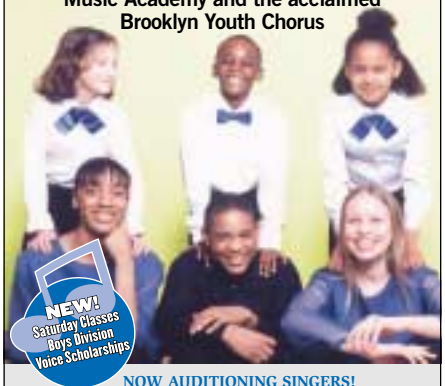
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The Brooklyn Papers PARENT

Whine connoisseur

Q: "My 4-year-old daughter is whiny. How can I stop this annoying habit?"
— a mother

A: Whining wins out when parents cave in.

"Children will give it up if it gets them nowhere," says Carolyn Crowder, co-author of "Whining," (Fireside, 2000).

Instead of giving in or getting irritated, Crowder suggests, take time for training. No matter how inconvenient it is, no matter how tired you are, teach your child that whining doesn't work.

"The way parents react heavily influences what children will continue to do over and over again," she says. "There are a lot of parents who are saps when it comes to their kids."

Look at your own parenting style. Are you calm, self-confident and self-respecting? Or inconsistent, irritable and easily worn down by pestering?

Here's how a child learns that if she whines enough, she'll get her way: She clutches a little doll throughout a store, and her mom sticks with "no, no, no" — until giving in at the checkout counter. Voila! Once again, whining magically turns a "no" into a "yes."

Withdraw from the power struggles, ignore the whining, and commit to a discipline plan that uses logical consequences, says Crowder, a psychologist and parent educator.

Before a shopping trip, explain what kind of behavior you expect and the consequence if your child misbehaves.

Plan on it being a "training trip," where consistent follow-through makes all the difference. If she whines for a toy, immediately take her home. Don't give her a second chance in the store, but tell her she will get another chance on your next shopping trip, Crowder suggests.

Don't get into negotiations, and no further punishment at home such as isolation is necessary.

"You don't have to drive the point home in an autocratic way," she says.

Indeed, it's inconvenient to interrupt a shopping trip, but as Crowder says, "Parenting is about the most inconvenient thing you can do."

Preschoolers catch on quickly, and after two or three interrupted outings they should learn that "no" means "no."

One mother has found that if she takes her 3-year-old son to the grocery store after a nap and snack, he's less likely to whine and is more easily redirected. He has little jobs, like counting bananas and apples, and his own shopping list. He's too busy to dwell on junk food or toys.

For some mothers, their kids' whining — "I'm so bored," "I'm hungry" — starts as soon as they pick up the phone. If you talk to your kids or get off the phone when they interrupt, you reinforce the whining. Instead, use calls to friends — or fake calls — to train your child to give you a few minutes of peace on the phone.

One mother warns her kids before she makes calls, and gives them a chance to ask for drinks and make other requests. Another idea: Keep craft boxes by the phone to pull out to occupy your kids.

In addition to logical consequences, Crowder says whining also subsides when children feel they belong to the family by doing chores.

"Children are looking for ways to belong. When they're little, they try a little of this and a little of that," she says. "Kids will take negative attention if they can't get positive."

Give your child a chore each day so she feels like a partner in the family, a father suggests.

To avoid repeated requests in whiny tones, one mom leaves little of the day's routine up for discussion. Her 4-year-old son knows what TV shows he can watch, how to get himself water, that he can have sodas only on special occasions, and at his set bedtime he starts with four books — but he can lose books if he monkeys around.

Another mother has a similar philosophy: "Make your guidelines clear and stick to them."

Can you help?

If you have tips or a question, call our toll-free hotline any time at (800) 827-1092 or e-mail us at p2ptips@att.net.

Parent-to-Parent
By Betsy Flagler





Heights Lag Baomer

Children from Kiddie Korner Jewish Preschool in Brooklyn Heights donned festive dresses and marched on Montague and Remsen streets in celebration of the Lag Baomer festival Tuesday. The holiday commemorates the miracle suspension of an epidemic that killed 24,000 Torah scholars during the Roman occupation of Israel in the year 130.



Love a parade!

Families lined Third Avenue in Bay Ridge Sunday for the 52nd annual Norwegian Constitution Day Parade. Pictured above are (clockwise from bottom left) sisters Karla and Kristen Johnson, Valerie Mauldin, Solveig Johnson and Sam Mauldin.

The Brooklyn Papers / Tom Callan

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Posh spice

Ridge's La Maison Du Couscous offers Moroccan food that sings

By Tina Barry
for The Brooklyn Papers

La Maison Du Couscous — French for "The House of Couscous" — in Bay Ridge, changes the usual all-show Moroccan restaurant equation.

No belly dancers, here. In fact, no show at all. The house is more of a walk-in closet with seven glass-topped tables.

The real razzle-dazzle comes from the cooking.

Opened one year ago by Abderrahim "Zachy" Ezzaki, this diminutive cafe, ably serving both Moroccan clientele and neighborhood locals, has garnered great word of mouth. While buzz can also lead to a "What's all the fuss about?" experience, that wasn't the case at La Maison Du Couscous. After a meal there, I wondered why there wasn't a line out the door.

Moroccan cooking borrows from its explorers and conquerors: the French, Middle Easterners and Asians. The result is a cuisine that employs hot and sweet peppers, cinnamon, light, refreshing mint and deeply aromatic basil. Lusty, hot peppers and olives mix with tart, preserved lemons; and essences of orange blossom water and rosewater impart a floral note to drinks and dessert. To turn out satisfying Moroccan food, spices need to be employed judiciously so that each complements the other and one spice doesn't hog the show.

There's no better example of this alchemy than the velvety zaalouk. Soft and unctuous, the eggplant spread is deeply smoky, as if the eggplants were slowly roasted over a wood fire. The mixture tasted of cumin, and a bit of garlic, and last, the lingering flavor of paprika. It was delicious scooped up with a spongy disc of the warm, house-baked Moroccan semolina bread.

DINING

La Maison Du Couscous (484 77th St. at Fifth Avenue in Bay Ridge) accepts Visa, MasterCard, American Express and Discover. Entrees: $7.95-$11.95. For information, call (718) 921-2800.

Cracked green olives liberally laced with red pepper began the meal. Their fiery heat and briny, acidic flavor contrasted beautifully with the zaalouk, and paired well with all the dishes I tried.

La Maison Du Couscous doesn't have a liquor license. They offer tea, coffee, soda,



The Brooklyn Papers / Greg Mango

Spice of life: La Maison Du Couscous' earthenware *tajine* dishes, including this lamb dish, release an aromatic cloud of steam when opened.

and in addition to orange and apple juices, they serve the unusual avocado and almond juices.

Try the almond juice. It looks like a frothy glass of milk but has a light, clean almond flavor. A few drops of orange blossom water scented the drink with a delicate floral aroma, and the ground almonds left a pleasingly rough texture on the tongue. The juice worked like a balm on the palate. Sipped after popping an olive into the mouth, it instantly calmed the fire of the hot peppers.

Four little phyllo triangles called briwats were stuffed with coarsely chopped shrimp, scallops and calamari. A squeeze of lemon brought out the clean flavors of the seafood.

Skipping the couscous at La Maison Du Couscous is like passing on the flapjacks at the International House of Pancakes. Couscous is tiny grains of semolina pasta, steamed and served as a base for meat, fish and vegetable stews, like an alternative to rice. It's the national dish of Morocco and the chefs at this House of Couscous do it proud. The lamb couscous is one huge shank served over a pile of fluffy couscous. The lamb was tender, and its sauce thick and sweet with onions and plump sweet raisins.

As superb as the restaurant's signature dish is, their tajines are even better. A tajine is a deep earthenware dish with a tight-fitting conical lid. A stew of meat, fish and vegetables slow cooks in the tajine. Lift the top off and an aromatic cloud of steam settles over the table. Magic happened under the lid that transformed a chicken breast into something far better. The flesh of the bird became dense and succulent. Like a sponge, it absorbed the flavors of green olives and preserved lemon. When touched with a fork, the tangy, rich juice of the meat oozed onto chunks of creamy potatoes.

Then there's the soft-spoken waitress with the teapot. Yes, it was frightening to have an arc of scalding liquid so near my face, but once poured, the tea was sweet and minty and as calming as a dose of Prozac.

A display case of honey-sweetened pastries sat in the corner of the restaurant. They're usually too sweet for me, and I wanted something cold to end the meal. The creme caramel was refreshing, but also too sweet. Stick with the house-made biscotti — moist and almondy — and a cup or two of the lovely tea.

The only thing that La Maison Du Couscous lacks is high drama. That's fine with me. If I want entertainment, I'll go to Broadway. When I want good conversation and a great meal, I'm hightailing it to La Maison.

WHERE TO GO...

Continued from page GO 4...

and Fort Hamilton Parkway. Call for reservations. (718) 630-4349. **Free.**

SPRING FEVER: Brooklyn Lyceum presents Random Violence at 7:30 pm; Ramata Diakete at 9 pm. $12. 227 Fourth Ave. (347) 683-7698.

BARGEMUSIC: chamber music program of all Bach. $35. 7:30 pm. Fulton Ferry Landing. (718) 624-2083.

GALAPAGOS ART SPACE: Feijoada plays Brazilian music. $6. 9:30 pm. 70 North Sixth St. (718) 782-5188.

LOW BAR: Sam Barron plays music. No cover. 10 pm. 81 Washington St. (718) 222-1LOW.

REUNION: 50th reunion of Brooklyn College's class of 1953. Call for information. (718) 951-5065.

ST. ANN'S WAREHOUSE: "Labapalooza" puppets. Program B. 8 pm. See Sat.

BLACK BOX SERIES: Series of new plays presented by The Gallery Players. Box 1 features "Holy Child," a piece about three brothers reuniting to confront their older brother. $15, $12 children under 12 and seniors. 8 pm. 199 14th St. (718) 595-0547.

FRI, MAY 30

BAMCINEMATEK: "Village Voice Take 4" film critics poll presents: "Domestic Violence" (2002). $10. 2 and 7 pm. 30 Lafayette Ave. (718) 595-2150.

PSYCHIATRY FILM GROUP: Maimonides Medical Center offers the film "Goodfellas." Talk on mob family values follows. 6:30 to 9:30 pm. Schreiber Auditorium, 4801 10h Ave. (718) 283-7713. **Free.**

SPRING FEVER: Brooklyn Lyceum presents Random Violence at 7:30 pm; Traci Lynn Smith at 9 pm and "High Life and The Lives of Inanimate Objects" at 10 pm. $12. 227 Fourth Ave. (347) 683-7698.

GALAPAGOS ART SPACE: Amnesty International presents the film "Domestic Violence." 7 pm. Call for ticket info. Also, Los Acutilocos. $8. 10:30 pm. 70 North Sixth St. (718) 782-5188.

WHITE COLLAR SHOW: Gleason's Gym hosts a boxing event. $20 registration fee, $15 spectators, $5 members. 7:30 pm. 83 Front St. (718) 797-2872.

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